



THE RATTLESNAKE



anarchist syndicalist journal

Issue #1

"They're like rattlesnakes, they won't compromise..so we gotta step on them"

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Contents: Page 5-Richard Opalsky, 7-Rocker-Anarcho-Syndicalism, 12-Martyn Everett, 14-Emma Goldman-Syndicalism, 16-Tom Brown-Syndicalism, 19-Guerin-Malatesta, 21-Guerin-Russia, 32-Peirats-May Days, 36-James Tracy, 38-Angry Landlords, 44-SF Messengers Strike, 46-Peter Simonelli, 50-Mean Rich Guy, 54-Iggy-Turd Caen-SF, 58-Michael DeCapite, 63-Getting by in America, 72-Dot Com Boom, 77-Texas Death Machine, 79-Guatemala, 90-Christian Parenti-Lockdown America, 99-James Loewen Lies Across..., 103-World Hunger, 108-Larry Livermore- Liberal goes Right, 118- Mario in Torino, 121-Retail Hell, 123-Carlos in Santiago, 124-Erik Hanould, 126-Nader, 128-Chris Crass, 132-Columbia: War ...

Rattlesnake#1-page 1

Tommy S. -editor

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Rattlesnake Committee meets first Sat 7 PM at Docs Clock

If you want to bludgeon me, I look like a very skinny backpack-wearing Richard Dreyfus. I carry NO weapons.

Subscriptions: \$3 per issue. \$2 each in bulk orders of five or more. Next issue out early March 2001

HELLO! To the first issue of six! I hope you appreciate the simplicity. The first portion is new and old anarchist essays, chapters from books-the meaty politics- the middle has direct contributions, misc good stuff, and the last 1/3 reprints I chose for informative or humanitarian interest with first person accounts included.

Rather than scream in rampaging hostility and denunciation, or delve into obscurest rhetoric, I choose to put out a magazine that offers more information than angry diatribe, with a good bit of life and personality thrown in. The most important thrusts for any anarchist of today should be education and organization. This magazine will not be centered only on USA, international news and history, but also on progressive non-hierarchical organization. The saga of P-9 in Austin, MN is as important as the collectives in Spain. The insight, of say, Eric as an ILWU organizer is as important to us as the first person account of life and aspirations from any worker 'comfortable', or down and out. Some of us are the best paid, some the worst paid compared to other 'western nations', but we all are involved in the biggest security state the world has ever known. We also, if we look at paper laws, know we are in one of the most free democracies of the world. That alone should make us push even harder. The door is closing. The Iron Heel is upon us. If we have the freedom to organize and progress why can't we stop what our government and it's corporate leaders acquire in spoil at the expense of almost all nations on the planet? Not a question to be answered by sloganeering. Not anything a little magazine can change. The system is deeply entrenched and very powerful. It encompasses all our lives. Only about 5 companies now control all the major news mainstream outlets. Most people get their information from TV and corporate newspapers. Not news, to any of us, but something we should remind ourselves of daily. The very idea of freedom being a house, or apartment with a couple and a computer and 100 channels is frighteningly taken as the norm now. What absurdity, but look how it paints

a license for their atomized society. No interaction. No community. No civic democracy. No door-to-door organizing. It can all be done by emailing through wires. (1) There is no discussion of capitalism itself in the media. It is accepted as the driving social equalizing force that it was lauded as 200 years ago. The system, the USA version of it, finds the cheapest wages, forces (through many ways, governments) to do its bidding, even to the point of massacres in what our press labels democracies, and then asks for more. More cuts in wages. More votes in Congress against our rights. It doesn't stop. The most liberal and good-hearted of our politicians in the USA don't even dare question the logic of the market deciding the future. That was the 60's. Or the 30's history that none of us learn about in public schools. Outside of the realm of the rather wealthy USA, the tally of casualties, the stomping out by the iron heel on any tiny bit of economic justice or bottom-up democracy is too hideous to mention now. One read through Bridge of Courage brings tears of despair.

It is important to note that some our most respected mass murderers in the past recognized this destruction of democracy. Take Teddy Roosevelt who led the invasion of the Phillipines in 1900-05 that ended in at least 100,000 mostly civilians (farmers and hill people) dead:

In an address at Harvard "We all know that, as things actually are, many of the most influential and most highly remunerated members of the Bar in every center of wealth, make it their special task to work out bold and ingenious schemes by which their wealthy client's individuals or corporate, can evade the lawyers which were made to regulate, in the interests of the public, the uses of great wealth."

And then we could veer to a much more humanitarian man, Abraham Lincoln, who said just before his death "I see in the near future a crisis approaching that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country...Corporations have been enthroned, an era of corruption in high place will follow, and the money-power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working upon the prejudices of the people until the wealth is aggregated in a few hands and the Republic itself is destroyed."

The free Republic, if it ever existed considering that million of blacks were in slavery, was destroyed long ago. And the change and chance that Reconstruction offered to black Americans was snuffed out by 1877 (2). Compare the humanitarian genius of writings from our heroes James Baldwin and WEB Du Bois to the babbling psycho corporate rantings of our politicians today, who supposedly can 'run our government' and we should be laughing to a heart attack. The anarchists of 100 or 130 years ago saw it all in such eloquent and passionate terms, that when you can read them, if you were ever allowed, you wonder why you were taught to detest the word 'anarchy' and equate its meaning with 'chaos'. When in fact it represents the most organized and free for innovation social and economic theory of all. But as you get deeper, it is not wonder of its absence you see, but anger over its obvious suppression in another class's interest that left this out of your life. The very basis of this ideology demands bottom up decision making, federation of communities from urban areas to rural, of nation to nation so that borders someday cease to exist, and a highly civilized horizontal structure of distribution of services, food and welfare for all in such a way that would put the entire bureaucratic and managerial class out of business. They should be enjoying life as we should, and not beating up people. And of course, it demands capitalism be gone. This capitalism, this economic system that exists on one simple

idea, of constant increase of profits for the few that own it all, is certainly a very unstable and inherently wrong system to push into the next century, ignoring the idea for now that it is supposed to coexist with democracy and increase social freedoms. Famines across the world prove it is a highly mis-managed economic system. That workers in countries all over the world who only want land that can easily be made into sustainable farms, are forced to cities to live in horrible slums, is another obvious crime of it's chaotic top-down nature. And exposes its 200 year old lie that any kind of level playing field with equal opportunity for all has ever existed. Politically (if you can allow me to remove that word from present connotations) it points out a very obvious fact to us all. No parliament, no elected official can speak for us in the construct of 'democracy'. No one human, cloaked in leftist or progressive ideology or not, can decide what we all want. We know our lives. We know our wants. And we know that through discussion, argument, and education we can then come upon a decision that benefits us all. Excuse me for perhaps two cliché analogies, but, if your family, or community had 500 acres of farmland, would you use herbicides to poison the soil, deforest it completely when the trees protect against erosion and provide many benefits, and also pack cows and pigs into bins that then pollute your underground wells, while at the same time, you expected your children and grandchildren to live and feed off this same land? Of course not. And millions of farmers, and fishing people are fighting battles against such mono-crop and corporate farming across the world. (3) Would you allow, if you had the power, a company to move from your urban area to cheaper more exploited labor, after you had increased its profits for years on subsistence wages?

My over-use of the term throughout the next six issues, of 'direct democracy' reflect a demanding current through all traditional anarchist writings. And it reflects my own desires as well. I trust my (yes very atomized, ecologically unsound, etc) urban community, to come up with better decisions about housing and economics than any Clinton, Gore, or William F. Buckley. That really goes without saying to all of you doesn't it? So aren't you anarchists? Most of you are. I will also continually use marxist/anarchist cliché terms such as 'the ruling class' (the rich that actually are involved in military, political and social policy), 'class war' (in that it exists only top down now), and 'liberal'. The last, I will always use as a derogatory term in application to the 'liberals' that have some effect on social policy and dispersion of information to the media. If you on the street, think you are 'liberal' as in respectful of human rights and against any ecological destruction, don't take offense. In real time media terminology, you should start calling yourself a leftist instead. Because 'liberals' are supporters of capitalism as a stationary economic system which does not allow respect for human and the earth as both part of nature and as both having 'rights' above and beyond the enriching of few with power and capital. As another example, WE would not build a mass transport system on the idea of profit potential. We would take discussion from the geologists, urban studies and population specialists, the 'unskilled' that lay the rails and dig the ditches; the people capable of handling the construction of trains and knowing the availability of resources nearby, and then build undergrounds and tracks to where people decided they should go, not based on profits, so that we could all leave our cars at home. Is that some imagined utopia? Our politicians tell us mass transit to clean our air, to create more public community, allow more dense but people friendly housing, is some socialist utopia. To us, it seems like a given. It just should be done. But we aren't making the decisions.

How do you talk about social revolution within this country? How, as an anarchist do you expect to reach the bitter, the ostracized, the incarcerated that experience conditions that would make any sane worker violent and then insane, or then reach the workers isolated and fed on TV? And then how do you reach the middle

JACK LONDON THE IRON HELL 1907

"But to return to my indictment. If modern man's producing power is a thousand times greater than that of the caveman, why then, In the United States today, are there fifteen million people who are not properly sheltered and properly fed? Why then, in the United States today, are there three million child labourers? It is a true indictment. The capitalist class has mismanaged. In face of the facts that modern man lives more wretchedly than the cave-man, and that his producing power is a thousand times greater than that of the cave-man, no other conclusion is possible than that the capitalist class has mismanaged, that you have mismanaged, my masters, that you have criminally and selfishly mismanaged. And on this count you cannot answer me here tonight, face to face, any more than can your whole class answer the million and a half of revolutionists in the United States. You cannot answer. I challenge you to answer. And furthermore, I dare to say to you now that when I have finished you will not answer. On that point you will be tongue-tied, though you will talk wordily enough about other things. You have failed in your management. You have made a shambles of civilisation. You have been blind and greedy. You have risen up (as you today rise up), shamelessly, in our legislative halls, and declared that profits were impossible without the toil of children and babes. Don't take my word for it. It is all in the records against you. You have lulled your conscience to sleep with prattle of sweet ideals and dear moralities, You are fat with power and possession, drunken with success; and you have no more hope against us than have the drones, clustered about the honey-vats, when the worker-bees spring upon them to end their rotund existence. You have failed in your management of society, and your management is to be taken away from you. A million and a half of the men of the working class say that they are going to get the rest of the working class to join with them and take the management away from you. This is the revolution, my masters. Stop it if you can."



FLIPPER the dog. Shepard, Coyote and Badger mix. Chews animal and human refuse. Attacks. Expert mouse catcher !! On the fly! Leaps at small children to steal ice cream. Eats gross crap off of sidewalk..... bug snatcher.....co-editor.

class and professionals that are seemingly whole heartedly against the 'lower classes' with an unreal fear of crack addicts coming out of the sewers.

By reason, by mass organizing. Not by fear., not by threats. Coercion is the bosses' way. We must create a social revolution as the opposite against these tactics. The back hand of capital knocks down and belittles all, including the small business owner. The slap of profits underestimates the power of 100 workers' knowledge against one bureaucrat, but the law of profit blinds us unable to see the fields of millions of creative individuals ready to and often attempting to, band together for the common good. Instead we see nothing but fields of creeping thorns and weeds that we are told scheme to 'take what we have' as little as that may be.

I chose to label this magazine anarchist-syndicalist for a conscious reason. There are many variants of 'anarchism' lately as always, but since the 60's a very anti-worker variant has surfaced. That which labels all labor based union organized anarchism as anti-environment or wholly 'man above nature', which is all-untrue. In any rational discussion about a better future, we cannot ignore any degradation of our planet. It should be understood that an anarchist-syndicalist would choose decentralized economics with utmost concern to the effect locally ecologically as would he/she would choose politics that demand the local. But sadly, in the US and the UK there are many 'anarchists', some call them 'neo-primitive', that immediately equate any union based anarchism with production-at-all-cost leninist-marxist thought. On that note, we should recognize the infection of marxist-leninism, the authoritarian centralized solution to human and economic rights, that has permeated much of left discussions and political parties in the US since the 1920s. To suddenly deny bottom up organizing and decision making destroys the very basics of what we would consider left anti-capitalist solutions. But the idea of the vanguard party leading 'us' while disregarding mass social/ideological revolution is rampant even among the anti-union new anarchists no matter how much they use consensus (5), still prevalent in so-called socialist parties that have vanguard centralized bodies, and comes up even in grass-roots meetings of every type, and as Chomsky has noted, is all-encompassing in an ironic way in the anti-red liberal intellectual tomb.

Let me be trite, and hold off some reactionary letters, let me say also that this notion of a 'worker' being someone in a GM or Soviet totalitarian-style factory is also a boil from this marxist-leninist infection. If you have little control over your life, politically, socially, economically or ecologically, and hold views pro-human/earth contrary to accepted hierarchical rule, I say you are a worker. If you wish for community, just economics and value your neighbors life as your own, you are a worker. You work for a state, and/or a boss, and a ruling class. This is not some reformist leap I am making. It is based in all traditional anarchism. You see 'the people' stated often as 'the workers' by all who we respect.

I feel safe in assuring myself that many people have progressed in this country and around the world, to the point where the idea of a 'union' does not necessarily have the capitalist and modern marxist disparaging connotation of the conservative AFL-CIO and its history of reactionary racist dictatorial leadership. That is, that many of us understand the words 'a union'just as a 'democracy' ...has many different forms. It is simply a word that describes a coalition. Within the context of our own politics and social interaction and especially how we organize, we are defining our meaning of what a union is. When I say 'union' in the context of this forum, it should be understood, unless labeled otherwise, that I mean an organization for defense of economic and democratic rights and by course of ne-

cessity will have an international outlook. And yes I did finish Foner's ten volume Labor History...essential stuff therein. Leaders and politicians on both sides betray us at every point. The bottom-up voices, the rank and file—there lies the future. Any anarchist syndicalist union would encompass all aspects our lives, not just what happens on the 'floor'. Since all of us, those who can work full-time, or two part-time jobs, or beg and sift through garbage waiting for the 'luxury' of a living wage.... spend the majority of our time thinking, living, reacting, suffering from the 'work' it is only common sense that any vision of radical progressive change must include that 'floor' you are on. The line, the keyboard, at the wheel, at the counter, in the uniform that you wish you could wash to street gray, in the office that sucks the air from your lungs at 9: 01, picking and spraying at slave wages....the places we spend most of our lives are so all encompassing and affect us so much that we destroy what love and joy we have in 'free time'. If we address the future, and reflect that it will cause combat in self-defense, we must also address the present and engage in self-defense for all involved. An injury to one is to all.

As an administrative editor I will also choose to support many so-called left 'reformist' battles. I want to document and herald any grass-roots progression even in instituting statist legislation, or wage gains through strikes, or rent control, or other controls on capital. The idea of social revolution is unqualified science fiction talk if you don't care about your fellow workers, some stop-gap of environmental destruction and support holdback on state military killings.

So join a real union, or start a new one, and put out your own damn newsmagazine!
The world needs all of us! Five fingers make a fist! Solidarity for a better world and a new future!!!

- (1) Door to door is certainly evident in the few 'politicians' we trust. Ammiano, a SF supervisor is easily reachable. Willie Brown doesn't walk our streets. Gore backers emailed us all, and sent completely non-informative glossy mailers, to vote against Nader because of some bullshit about Gore appointing being an angel to Bush. Nader campaigners knocked on my door. A difference between Pluto and Mercury. One's hot, one's cold as hell. Imagine how people would be energized in a door to door anarchist/Union campaign and with a meeting place to further the good.
- (2) After the civil war, republicans, the anti-slavery party then, with the help of the federal gov't, instituted gov'ts down south. Black males turned out 90% in the first election. Something that has not happened since of any color. Within 5 years (1865 to 1870) there were mass violent outbreaks all over the south. White stopping black from voting, plantation owners hiring militias to force them back to slavery, capital shutting out small holders of land, and hundreds of black office holders were killed. White workers joined in the fascist attacks. By 1877 'Reconstruction' was ended', not only by terror unleashed by the white hand of capital, but also the political petty ass-kissing of the republicans. From 1870 to 1877 it would take 100 pages to list all the black Americans that were assassinated while the federal government stood by. A bloody ghost to JFK's lackluster back off during the early 60's.
- (3) Stolen Harvest is a great book about India in this sense. And of course World Hunger covers all the arguments about the lie of overpopulation. Famines all over the world are a case of lack of access to resources.....Somalia, Ethiopia, India. Then there are the horrible famines in China, and Russia (Stalin). All cases of a ruling class ('communist' but really right wing totalitarian) centralizing control and ruining subsistence farming.
- (4) Anecdote: A friend heard a co-worker (before the trouble that was to happen on new years eve 1999 -that didn't) found out he couldn't get a gun in time cuz of a 15 -day waiting period, so he had bought a cross-bow. He actually proclaimed this to his fellow workers. And Mike was at a sports store—people were lined up with ammo, so much so that the Rattlesnake #1- page 4

store knew they should put a sign up "No returns on Ammo", since all these people that had stockpiled for the riots on day 2000 would try that.

5) I refer here not to the voting or organizational style of small groups but to the elitist exclusion enacted by groups that do not attempt mass organizing drives among 'workers' or people. On a one-to-one basis you can hear in anti-union anarchist/marxist groups such comments as people are stupid, need to be lead, or fuck those meat eaters or screw those breeders SUV drivers etc.... Obviously a huge breach or bastardization of rational anarchist thinking. But it happens. Ignore them. Resist with common compassionate sense.

The End of Chaos Through Anarchy?

Richard Opalsky

1. Anarchy stands opposed to organization and institution. 2. Anarchy promotes unfettered freedom, a liberated state of social chaos. 3. Anarchy is rooted in destruction, since what is being destroyed is oppressive. If you agree with any of the three preceding descriptions of anarchism, or if you are sympathetic to the way they characterize anarchism, then this article was written for you! Statements 1, 2, and 3 are all false statements. In fact, anarchist theory suggests massive re-organizational efforts- nonetheless organized; it promotes freedom, but only through a new social and economic order, and it is far more focused on being constructive than it is on being destructive. By the end of this article, it will be clear that anarchy does not mean any of those ideas numbered above. My hope is that people start to ask why it is that they were led to believe that anarchy meant any of those things, and that we may begin to understand the real merits and pitfalls of anarchism. But, before we begin, I should point out that I do not self-identify as an anarchist. In fact, I do not self-identify with any one line of political thinking. My political views are made up of what I see as the best parts of various radical politics. Anarchism, I happily admit, the politics that has always been the most dissatisfied with the existing state of government and mass culture, does lend a lot to my thinking.

The underground and alternative communities- where we find those more likely to tout the title of 'anarchists', often seem more confused about what anarchy is than the conservative mainstream. The common public finds anarchism a laughable and unserious theory, mostly unaware that there even is a theoretical foundation for it. And the idea of anarchy in practice is a frightening hypothesis for them. Sadly, there are too many punks with 'circle A' logos on their T-shirts, drinking themselves into a stupor of exhausted lifelessness, and claiming that being an anarchist is their main reason for not caring about society. These folks have made an unfortunate choice in naming themselves, since they are just as opposed to the potential of anarchism as are the capitalist leaders who sit in the World Bank consortium. This may sound a drastic comparison, but an apathetic community that calls itself 'political' is as counter-progressive as our tobacco companies.

Anarchy has its history in France, Italy, Spain, Russia and the US, and has its thickest roots stemming from the early 19th century. "Anarchism is really a synonym for socialism. The anarchist is primarily a socialist whose aim is to abolish the exploitation of man by man."¹ A fellow named Adolf Fischer further clarified that 'every anarchist is a socialist, but every socialist is not necessarily an anarchist' (Ibid.). Anarchists are mostly sympathetic to the aims and politics of the socialists, but they are frustrated with the lack of impact that socialism has had on popular, prevalent politics. The anarchists do not think that they know a more immediate and forceful route to a socialist utopia, but they do have their own ideas. They believe that the socialist organizations have already been accounted for in the design of capitalist society. Such groups have their rights to free speech and assembly,

unless, of course, they use these rights to achieve positive visibility through the viscous of the mainstream media. We often see what provisions the government has lying in wait for oppositional voices that finally make themselves audible. Whenever we hear that these constitutional rights are being violated, we usually learn that they were being used to articulate dissidence. Protesters are shot at, beaten, jailed and gassed, and the media holds out microphones all day until they snatch a quote which can be used by the public to rationalize the abuses of these rights. So anarchists share in the firm belief that governments have unpublicized, but well-thought out and militarily backed plans for whomever they perceive as subversive. There is nothing conspiratorial about this. Anyone can read about the counter-insurgency or 'crowd control' tactics of the military and police, J Edgar Hoover's Counter Intelligence Operation (COINTEL) during the civil rights movement, and one can still find the occasional copy of the old US Senate's *Directory of un-American Activities*- a manual which lists almost every non-governmental agency or organization that focuses on minority groups, social and economic justice, and has not aligned itself with the laxative politics of mainstream America.

The most unifying of all anarchist beliefs is the belief that social, economic, and political justice can never be achieved through reform. Reform means action taken towards changing the prevalent system by **adding** amendments to its laws, new stipulations to old laws, and **subtracting** (nullifying) laws that are no longer applicable. Reform is the bending of the system's rules- the erasing of its rougher edges. The political right, as well as the political left, is happy to seek their own kinds of reform: the first seeks reform through NAFTA and taxation, while the latter seeks reform through affirmative action and taxation. Anarchism is only about 160 years old, mainly because it rests on the absolute lack of faith in reform- a lack of faith which could only follow 6,000 years of government irresponsible to the interests and will of the people. Today, 200 men own 80% of the world's wealth. This means that the remaining 20% is left to be 'shared' by approximately 5 billion people. It is hard to imagine that this is the interest and will of the people.

The anarchist idea is not that government cannot work under any conditions; it is the idea that reforming oppressive and corruptible government into just and honest government cannot work. This is a common mistake of many self-identified anarchists. Anarchy is not reacting to the *idea of government*, but to *actual existing government*. Errico Malatesta wrote: "Those anarchists opposed to organization make the fundamental error of believing that organization is impossible without authority."² It is true that the fathers of anarchy, Michael Bakunin and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon spoke rabidly about government. Sometimes they did so as if it were an abstract idea to be opposed. But one must be cautious... The job of the fathers of anarchism was to substantiate the idea that the accepted model of a warring, class based, government cannot be transformed into an egalitarian paradise through legislative measures of its own design. It was and still is the first

step of anarchy to disconnect all activity against oppressive institutions from those institutions themselves. Graham Purchase, in his book Anarchism and Ecology³, points out that this route is already quite popular. There are many organizations that exist without the funding and endorsement of the state or federal government. There are cooperative record labels, grass-roots food and clothing outreach groups, independently owned and cultivated organic gardens and farms, alternative news media free of any advertising, and some dedicated minorities trying to house the homeless. While some of these groups appeal for government funding, others enjoy their status as 'other'—community based, community run, and community supported. Anarchism, from theory to practice, begins by forging families, groups, organizations and coops, not just to pick up the government's slack—but to provide more and more of the services we now enjoy. This is what Purchase refers to as the way to de-centralize power. The de-centralization of power is the natural outcome of disempowering an oligarchy. To disempower an oligarchy, there needs to be the mass reclaiming of public space via direct action, the ultimate utilization of our own spaces, thus far un-coopted, and the mass patronage and support of every non-governmental/corporate organization that provides a service alternative. But this is an extreme oversimplification intended to spark some thought. There have actually been a good number of anarchist communities and kibitzes throughout history which have been founded and run according to these principles. The main problem with taking this route, is that most of the would-be 'uncharted territory' has been pretty well cut up and proprietyzed already.

The anarchist view that reform does not yield radical change is a view that follows logically from witnessing hundreds of years of leftist reformers entrenching themselves in the system only to produce cosmetic change. By 'cosmetic change', I mean that certain things *are* changed for the better, but that they remain on the strata of superficiality. That is not at all to say that the legalization of abortion, the liberty to grow hemp, and a less combative stance towards other nations are/would be merely superficial. What it means to call these changes 'cosmetic' is to acknowledge that they are examples of progress which leave their main causes untouched. 'Unreformed' goes the basic capitalist allowance to make more money as individuals and a nation than can ever be spent on superfluous comfort. The fact that we live in an industrial nation where basic human needs are off-limits to all but the highest bidders is accepted as a fact of our existence. The anarchists understand that the illegality of abortion, the war on drugs, and wars of all kinds exist for the maintenance and perpetuation of oligarchic society. Legislation regarding them is effectual, but never strikes at the root of the problems most people endure. This root, oligarchy itself, remains the unshaken bedrock of our society. Affirmative action, for example, is an effective social program that we must defend from the right-wing efforts to abolish it. However, the very existence of affirmative action testifies to the fact that racial inequity is the default of society. This is what the anarchists mean by 'cosmetic'. Mr. Limbaugh and friends see affirmative action as unnecessary because they believe that racism has long been abolished, and many 'more liberal' Americans content themselves with the merit of our humanitarian society which has the heart to establish affirmative action—but the anarchist view is that racial injustice *cannot* be equalized through additions and subtractions to an historically and institutionally racist nation. Noam Chomsky, one of

our more cautious anarchists—although perhaps the greatest leader of anarchist thought today—describes anarchy in his book Class Warfare⁴ with the following: Recalling the ideas of John Dewey, Chomsky writes: "Politics is the shadow that big business casts over society... attenuating the shadow doesn't do much. Reforms are still going to leave it tyrannical... you can't even talk about democracy until you have democratic control of industry, commerce, banking, everything. That means control by the people who work in the institutions, and the communities."

So, the first move towards anarchy is to reject the concessions that have been safely reserved for our dissidents, and to act in accordance with the theory that real government must be built, not out of the tired body of our old oppressive stalwart, but out of ourselves. It requires creativity, organization, and the maximization of tactics already widely implemented at the grass-roots level. Anarchy is not utopian, as many of the more faithful ballot-enthusiasts might believe. Anarchism is rife with practical ideas for how to govern in new ways. In Seattle, the protesters decided many of their large-scale actions by employing an old anarchist method of 'consensus-choosing'. Consensus is a non-central decision-making process where only those people who participate in the consensus are beholden to take part in the action under the rules elected for its governance. Not surprisingly, the chant around these 'consensus-choosing' elections was—"This is what Democracy looks like!!"

Emma Goldman once wrote: "A practical scheme, says Oscar Wilde, is either one already in existence, or a scheme that could be carried out under the existing conditions; but it is exactly the existing conditions that one objects to. And any scheme that could accept these conditions is wrong and foolish. The true criterion of the practical, therefore, is not whether the latter can keep in tact the wrong and foolish; rather is it whether the scheme has the vitality enough to leave the stagnant waters of the old, and build, as well as sustain, new life."

notes:

¹ Daniel Guerin: Anarchism, New York, 1970

² Anarchy, London, 1942

³ New York, 1997.

⁴ Maine, 1996.

⁵ Anarchism and Other Essays, New York, 1969

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RUDOLF ROCKER'S ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM written in 1938

ANARCHISM: ITS AIMS AND PURPOSES chapter one

ANARCHISM is a definite intellectual current in the life of our time, whose adherents advocate the abolition of economic monopolies and of all political and social coercive institutions within society. In place of the present capitalistic economic order Anarchists would have a free association of all productive forces based upon co-operative labour, which would have as its sole purpose the satisfy -ing of the necessary requirements of every member of society, and would no longer have in view the special interest of privileged minorities within the social union. In place of the present state-organisations with their lifeless machinery of political and bureaucratic institutions Anarchists desire a federation of free communities which shall be bound to one another by their common economic and social interests and shall arrange their affairs by mutual agreement and free contract.

Anyone who studies at all profoundly the economic and political development of the present social system will easily recognise that these objectives do not spring from the Utopian ideas of a few imaginative innovators, but that they are the logical outcome of a thorough examination of the present day social maladjustments, which with every new phase of the existing social conditions manifest themselves more plainly and more unwholesomely. Modern monopoly, capitalism and the totalitarian state are merely the last terms in a development which could culminate in no other results.

The portentous development of our present economic system, leading to a mighty accumulation of social wealth in the hands of privileged minorities and to a continuous impoverishment of the great masses of the people, prepared the way for the present political and social reaction, and befriended it in every way. It sacrificed the general interests of human society to the private interests of individuals, and thus systematically undermined the relationship between man and man. People forgot that industry is not an end in itself, but should be only a means to insure to man his material subsistence and to make accessible to him the blessings of a higher intellectual culture. Where industry is everything and man is nothing begins the realm of a ruthless economic despotism whose workings are no less disastrous than those of any political despotism. The two mutually augment one another, and they are fed from the same source.

The economic dictatorship of the monopolies and the political dictatorship of the totalitarian state are the outgrowth of the same social objectives, and the directors of both have the presumption to try to reduce all the countless expressions of social life to the mechanical tempo of the machine and to tune everything organic to the lifeless rhythm of the political apparatus. Our modern social system has split the social organism in every country into hostile classes internally, and externally it has broken the common cultural circle up into hostile nations; and both classes and nations confront one another with open antagonism and by their ceaseless warfare keep the communal social life in continual convulsions.

The First World War and its terrible after effects, which are themselves only the results of the present struggles for economic and political power, and the constant dread of new wars, which today dominates all peoples, are only the logical consequences of this unendurable condition, which will inevitably lead us to a universal catastrophe, if social development does not take a new course soon enough. The mere fact that most states are obliged today to spend from fifty to seventy per cent of

their annual income for so-called national defence and the liquidation of old war debts is proof of the untenability of the present status, and should make clear to everybody that the alleged protection which the state affords the individual is certainly purchased too dearly.

The ever growing power of a soulless political bureaucracy which supervises and safeguards the life of man from the cradle to the grave is putting ever greater obstacles in the way of the solidaric co-operation of human beings and crushing out every possibility of new development. A system which in every act of its life sacrifices the welfare of large sections of the people, yes, of whole nations, to the selfish lust for power and the economic interests of small minorities must of necessity dissolve all social ties and lead to a constant war of each against all. This system has been merely the pacemaker for the great intellectual and social reaction which finds its expression today in modern Fascism, far surpassing the obsession for power of the absolute monarchy of past centuries and seeking to bring every sphere of human activity under the control of the state. just as for the various systems of religious theology God is everything and man nothing, so for this modern political theology, the state is everything and the subject nothing. And just as behind the 'will of God' there always lay hidden the will of privileged minorities, so today there hides behind the 'will of the state' only the selfish interest of those who feel called to interpret this will in their own sense and to force it upon the people.

Anarchist ideas are to be found in every period of known history, although there still remains a good deal of work for historical research in this field. We encounter them in the Chinese sage, Lao-tse (The Course and The Right Way) and in the later Greek philosophers, the Hedonists and Cynics and other advocates of so-called 'natural right', and in particular in Zeno who, at the opposite pole from Plato, founded the Stoic school. They found expression in the teaching of the Gnostic, Karpocrates, in Alexandria, and had an unmistakable influence on certain Christian sects of the Middle Ages in France, Germany, and Holland, almost all of which fell victims to the most savage persecutions. In the history of the Bohemian reformation they found a powerful champion in Peter Chelcicky, who in his work, 'The Net of Faith', passed the same judgement on the church and the state as Tolstoy did later. Among the great Humanists there was Rabelais, who in his description of the happy Abbey of Theleme (Gargantua) presented a picture of life freed from all authoritative restraints. Of other pioneers of libertarian thinking we will mention here only La Bohie, Sylvain Marechal, and, above all, Diderot, in whose voluminous writings one finds thickly strewn the utterances of a truly great mind which had rid itself of every authoritarian prejudice.

Meanwhile, it was reserved for more recent history to give clear form to the Anarchist conception of life and to connect it with the immediate processes of social evolution. This was done for the first time in William Godwin's splendidly conceived work, Concerning Political justice and its Influence upon General Virtue and Happiness, London, 1793. Godwin's work was we might say, the ripened fruit of that long evolution of the concepts of political and social radicalism in England which proceeds in a continuous line from George Buchanan through Richard Hoocher, Gerard Winstanley, Algernon Sidney, John Locke, Robert Wallace, and John Bellers to Jeremy Bentham, Joseph Priestley, Richard Price, and Thomas Paine.

Godwin recognised very clearly that the cause of social evils is to be sought, not in the forms of the state, but in its very existence. Just as the state presents only a caricature of a genuine society, so also it makes of human beings who are held under its eternal guardianship merely caricatures of their real selves by constantly compelling them to repress their natural inclinations and holding them to things that are repugnant to their inner impulses. Only in this way is it possible to mould human beings to the established form of good subjects. A normal human being who was not interfered with in his or her natural development would by themselves shape the environment that suits their inborn demand for peace and freedom.

But Godwin also recognised that human beings can only live together naturally and freely when the proper economic conditions for this are given, and when the individual is no longer subject to exploitation by another, a consideration which the representatives of mere political radicalism almost wholly overlooked. Hence they were later compelled to make constantly greater concessions to that power of the state which they had wished to restrict to a minimum. Godwin's idea of a stateless society assumed the social ownership of all natural and social wealth, and the carrying on of economic life by the free co-operation of the producers; in this sense he was really the founder of the later communist Anarchism.

Godwin's work had a very strong influence on advanced circles of the English workers and the more enlightened sections of the liberal intelligentsia. Most important of all, he contributed to give to the young Socialist movement in England, which found its maturest exponents in Robert Owen, John Gray, and William Thompson, that unmistakably libertarian character which it had for a long time, and which it never assumed in Germany and many other countries.

But a far greater influence on the development of Anarchist theory was that of Pierre Joseph Proudhon, one of the most intellectually gifted and certainly the most many-sided writer of whom modern Socialism can boast. Proudhon was completely rooted in the intellectual and social life of his period, and these inspired his attitude upon every question he dealt with. Therefore, he is not to be judged, as he has been even by many of his later followers, by his special practical proposals, which were born of the needs of the hour. Among the numerous Socialist thinkers of his time he was one who understood most profoundly the cause of social maladjustment, and possessed, besides, the greatest breadth of vision. He was the outspoken opponent of all systems, and saw in social evolution the eternal urge to new and higher forms of intellectual and social life, and it was his conviction that this evolution could not be bound by any definite abstract formulas.

Proudhon opposed the influence of the Jacobin tradition, which dominated the thinking of the French democrats and of most of the Socialists of that period with the same determination as the interference of the central state and economic monopoly in the natural processes of social advance. To rid society of those two cancerous growths was for him the great task of the nineteenth century revolution. Proudhon was no communist. He condemned property as merely the privilege of exploitation, but he recognised the ownership of the instruments of labour by all, made effective through industrial groups bound to one another by free contract, so long as this right was not made to serve the exploitation of others and as long as the full product of his individual labour was assured to every human being. This organisation based on reciprocity (*mutualite*) guarantees the enjoyment of equal rights by each in exchange for equal services. The average working time required for the completion of any product becomes the measure of its value and is the basis of mutual exchange. In this

way capital is deprived of its usurious power and is completely bound up with the performance of work. By being made available to all it ceases to be an instrument for exploitation.

Such a form of economy makes any political coercive apparatus superfluous. Society becomes a league of free communities which arrange their affairs according to need, by themselves or in association with others and in which each person's freedom finds in the equal freedom of others not its limitation, but its security and confirmation. 'The freer, the more independent and enterprising the individual is in a society, the better for the society'. This organisation of Federalism in which Proudhon saw the immediate future of the human race sets no definite limitations on further possibilities of development, and offers the widest scope to every individual and social activity. Starting out from the point of view of the Federation, Proudhon combated likewise the aspirations for political unity of the awakening nationalism of the time, and in particular of that nationalism which found in Mazzini, Garibaldi, Lelewel, and other such strong advocates. In this respect also he saw more clearly than most of his contemporaries. Proudhon exerted a strong influence on the development of Socialism, which made itself especially in the Latin countries. But the so-called individual Anarchism, which found able exponents in North America in such men as Josiah Warren, Stephen Pearl Andrews, William B. Greene, Lysander Spooner, Francis S. Tandy, and most notably in Benjamin R. Tucker ran in similar lines, though none of its representatives could approach Proudhon's breadth of view.

Anarchism found a unique expression in Max Stirner's book, *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* (The Ego and Its Own), which, it is true, quickly passed into oblivion and had no influence at all on the Anarchist movement as such - though it was to experience an unexpected resurrection fifty years later. Stirner's book is pre-eminently a philosophic work, which traces man's dependence on so-called higher powers through all its devious ways, and is not timid about drawing inferences from the knowledge gained by the survey. It is the book of a conscious and deliberate insurgent, which reveals no reverence for any authority, however exalted, and therefore impels powerfully to independent thinking.

Anarchism found a virile champion of vigorous revolutionary energy in Michael Bakunin, who took his stand upon the teachings of Proudhon, but extended them on the economic side when he, along with the collectivist wing of the First International, came out for the collective ownership of the land and of all other means of production, and wished to restrict the right of private ownership to the full product of individual labour. Bakunin also was an opponent of Communism, which in his time had a thoroughly authoritarian character, like that which it has again assumed today in Bolshevism. In one of his four speeches at the Congress of the League for Peace and Freedom in Bern (1868), he said: 'I am not a Communist because Communism unites all the forces of society in the state and becomes absorbed in it; because it inevitably leads to the concentration of all property in the hands of the state, while I seek the abolition of the state - the complete elimination of the principle of authority and governmental guardianship, which under the pretext of making men moral and civilising them, has up to now always enslaved, oppressed, exploited, and ruined them.'

Bakunin was a determined revolutionary and did not believe in an amicable adjustment of the existing class conflict. He recognised that the ruling classes blindly and stubbornly opposed even the slightest social reform, and accordingly saw the only salvation in an international social revolution, which should abolish all the ecclesiastical, political, military, bureaucratic, and judicial institutions of the existing social system and introduce in their stead a federation of free workers' associations to provide for the requirements of daily life, since he, like so many of his contemporaries, believed in the close proximity of the Revolution, he directed all his vast energy to combining all the genuinely revolutionary and libertarian elements within and without the International to safeguard the coming revolution against any dictatorship or any retrogression to the old conditions. Thus he became in an very special sense the creator of the modern Anarchist movement.

Anarchism found a valuable advocate in Peter Kropotkin, who set himself the task of making the achievements of modern natural science available for the development of the sociological concepts of Anarchism. In his ingenious book, *Mutual Aid - a Factor of Evolution*, he entered the lists against so-called Social Darwinism, whose exponents tried to prove the inevitability of the existing social conditions from the Darwinian theory of the struggle for existence by raising the struggle of the strong against the weak to the status of an iron law for all natural processes, to which even man is subject. In reality this conception was strongly influenced by the Malthusian doctrine that life's table is not spread for all, and that the unneeded will just have to reconcile themselves to this fact.

Kropotkin showed that this conception of nature as a field of unrestricted warfare is only a caricature of real life, and that along with the brutal struggle for existence, which is fought out with tooth and claw, there exists in nature also another principle which is expressed in the social combination of the weaker species and the maintenance of races by the evolution of social instincts and mutual aid.

In this sense man is not the creator of society, but society the creator of man, for he inherited from the species that preceded him the social instinct which alone enabled him to maintain himself in his first environment against the physical superiority of other species, and to make sure of an undreamed-of height of development. This second tendency in the struggle for existence is far superior to the first, as is shown by the steady retrogression of those species which have no social life and are dependent merely upon their physical strength. This view, which today is meeting with constantly wider acceptance in the natural sciences and in social research, opened wholly new vistas to speculation concerning human evolution.

The fact is that even under the worst despotism most of man's personal relations with his fellows are arranged by free agreement and solidaric cooperation, without which social life would not be possible at all. If this were not the case even the strongest coercive arrangements of the state would not be able to maintain the social order for a single day. However, these natural forms of behaviour, which arise from our inmost nature, are today constantly interfered with and crippled by the effects of economic exploitation and governmental guardianship, which represent in human society the brutal form of the struggle for existence, which have to be overcome by the other form of mutual aid and free co-operation. The consciousness of personal responsibility and that other precious good that has come down to man by inheritance from remote antiquity: that capacity for sympathy with others in which all social ethics, all ideas of social justice, have their origin, develop best in freedom.

Like Bakunin, Kropotkin too was a revolutionary. But he, like Elish Reclus and others, saw in revolution only a special phase of

the evolutionary process, which appears when new social aspirations are so restricted in their natural development by authority that they have to shatter the old shell by violence before they can function as new factors in human life. In contrast to Proudhon and Bakunin, Kropotkin advocated community ownership, not only of the means of production, but of the products of labour as well, as it was his opinion that in the present status of technique no exact measure of the value of individual labour is possible, but that, on the other hand, by a rational direction of our modern methods of labour it will be possible to assure comparative abundance to every human being. Communist Anarchism, which before him had already been urged by Joseph Dejacque, Elisée Reclus, Errico Malatesta, Carlo Cafiero, and others, and which is advocated by the great majority of Anarchists today, found in him one of its most brilliant exponents. Mention must also be made here of Leo Tolstoy, who took from primitive Christianity and, on the basis of the ethical principles laid down in the gospels, arrived at the idea of a society without rulership.

Common to all Anarchists is the desire to free society of all political and social coercive institutions which stand in the way of the development of a free humanity. In this sense Mutualism, Collectivism, and Communism are not to be regarded as closed systems permitting no further development, but merely as economic assumptions as to the means of safeguarding a free community. There will even probably be in the society of the future different forms of economic co-operation existing side by side, since any social progress must be associated with that free experimentation and practical testing-out for which in a society of free communities there will be afforded every opportunity.

The same holds true for the various methods of Anarchism. Most Anarchists of our time are convinced that a social transformation of society cannot be brought about without violent revolutionary convulsions. The violence of these convulsions, of course, depends upon the strength of the resistance which the ruling classes will be able to oppose to the realisation of the new ideas. The wider the circles which are inspired with the idea of a reorganisation of society in the spirit of freedom and Socialism, the easier will be the birth pains of the coming social revolution.

In modern Anarchism we have the confluence of the two great currents which during and since the French Revolution have found such characteristic expression in the intellectual life of Europe: Socialism and Liberalism. Modern Socialism developed when profound observers of social life came to see more and more clearly that political constitutions and changes in the form of government could never get to the bottom of that great problem that we call 'the social question'. Its supporters recognised that a social equalizing of human beings, despite the loveliest of theoretical assumptions, is not possible so long as people are separated into classes on the basis of their owning or not owning property, classes whose mere existence excludes in advance any thought of a genuine community. And so there developed the recognition that only by elimination of economic monopolies and common ownership of the means of production, in a word, by a complete transformation of all economic conditions and social institutions associated with them, does a condition of social justice become thinkable, a status in which society shall become a genuine commu-

nity, and human labour shall no longer serve the end of exploitation, but shall serve to assure abundance to everyone. But as soon as Socialism began to assemble its forces and become a movement, there at once came to light certain differences of opinion due to the influence of the social environment in different countries. It is a fact that every political concept from theocracy to Caesarism and dictatorship have affected certain factors in the Socialist movement. Meanwhile, there have been two great currents in political thought which have been of decisive significance for the development of Socialistic ideas: Liberalism, which powerfully stimulated advanced minds in the Anglo-Saxon countries and Spain, in particular, and Democracy in the later sense to which Rousseau gave expression in his Social Contract, and which found its most influential representatives in the leaders of French Jacobinism. While Liberalism in its social theorizing started off from the individual and wished to limit the state's activities to a minimum, Democracy took its stand on an abstract collective concept, Rousseau's 'general will', which it sought to fix in the national state.

Liberalism and Democracy were pre-eminently political concepts, and, since the great majority of the original adherents of both maintained the right of ownership in the old sense, these had to renounce them both when economic development took a course which could not be practically reconciled with the original principles of Democracy, and still less with those of Liberalism. Democracy with its motto of 'equality of all citizens before the law,' and Liberalism with its 'right of man over his own person,' both shipwrecked on the realities of the capitalist economic form. So long as millions of human beings in every country had to sell their labour-power to a small minority of owners, and to sink into the most wretched misery if they could find no buyers, the so-called 'equality before the law' remains merely a pious fraud, since the laws are made by those who find themselves in possession of the social wealth. But in the same way there can also be no talk of a 'right over one's own person,' for that right ends when one is compelled to submit to the economic dictation of another if he does not want to starve.

Anarchism has in common with Liberalism the idea that the happiness and prosperity of the individual must be the standard in all social matters. And, in common with the great representatives of Liberal thought, it has also the idea of limiting the functions of government to a minimum. Its supporters have followed this thought to its ultimate logical consequences, and wish to eliminate every institution of political power from the life of society. When Jefferson clothes the basic concept of Liberalism in the words: 'That government is best which governs least,' then Anarchists say with Thoreau: 'That government is best which governs not at all.'

In common with the founders of Socialism, Anarchists demand the abolition of all economic monopolies and the common ownership of the soil and all other means of production, the use of which must be available to all without distinction; for personal and social freedom is conceivable only on the basis of equal economic advantages for everybody. Within the Socialist movement itself the

Anarchists represent the viewpoint that the war against capitalism must be at the same time a war against all institutions of political power, for in history economic exploitation has always gone hand in hand with political and social oppression. The exploitation of man by man and the domination of man over man are inseparable, and each is the condition of the other. As long as within society a

possessing and a non-possessing group of human beings face one another in enmity, the state will be indispensable to the possessing minority for the protection of its privileges. When this condition of social injustice vanishes to give place to a higher order of things, which shall recognize no special rights and shall have as its basic assumption the community of social interests, government over men must yield the field to the administration of economic and social affairs, or, to speak with Saint Simon: 'The time will come when the art of governing men will disappear. A new art will take its place, the art of administering things.'

And this disposes of the theory maintained by Marx and his followers that the state, in the form of a proletarian dictatorship, is a necessary transitional stage to a classless society, in which the state after the elimination of all class conflicts and then of classes themselves, will dissolve itself and vanish from the canvas. This concept, which completely mistakes the real nature of the state and the significance on history of the factor of political power, is only the logical outcome of so-called economic materialism, which sees in all the phenomena of history merely the inevitable effects of the methods of production of the time. Under the influence of this theory people came to regard the different forms of the state and all other social institutions as a 'juridical and political superstructure on the 'economic edifice' of society, and thought that they had found in that theory the key to every historic process. In reality every section of history affords us thousands of examples of the way in which the economic development of a country has been set back for centuries and forced into prescribed forms by particular struggles for political power.

Before the rise of the ecclesiastical monarchy, Spain was industrially the most advanced country in Europe and held the first place in economic production in almost every field. But a century after the triumph of the Christian monarchy most of its industries have disappeared. What was left of them survived only in the most wretched condition. In most industries they had reverted to the most primitive methods of production. Agriculture collapsed, canals and waterways fell into ruin, and vast stretches of country were transformed into deserts. Down to this day Spain has never recovered from that set-back. The aspirations of a particular caste for political power had laid economic development fallow for centuries.

Princely absolutism in Europe, with its silly 'economic ordinances' and 'industrial legislation,' which punished severely any deviation from the prescribed methods of production and permitted no new inventions, blocked industrial progress in European countries for centuries, and prevented its natural development. And were there not considerations of political power which after the First World War constantly balked any escape from the universal economic crisis and delivered the future of whole countries to politics-playing generals and political adventurers? Who will assert that modern 'Fascism' was an inevitable result of economic development?

In Russia, however, where the so-called 'proletarian dictatorship' has ripened into reality, the aspirations of a particular party for political power have prevented any truly socialistic reconstruction of economy and have forced the country into the slavery of a grinding state-capitalism. The 'dictatorship of the proletariat,' in which naive souls wish to see merely a passing, but inevitable, transition stage to real Socialism, has today grown into a frightful despotism, which lags behind the tyranny of the Fascist states in nothing.

The assertion that the state must continue to exist until class conflicts, and classes with them, disappear, sounds, in the light of all historical experience, almost like a bad joke. Every type of political power presupposes some particular form of human slavery, for the maintenance of which it is called into

being, just as outwardly, that is, in relation to other states, the state has to create certain artificial antagonisms in order to justify its existence, so also internally the cleavage of society into castes, ranks, and classes is an essential condition of its continuance. The state is capable only of protecting old privileges and creating new ones; in that its whole significance is exhausted.

A new state which has been brought into existence by a social revolution can put an end to the privileges of the ruling classes, but it can do this only by immediately setting up a new privileged class, which it will require for the maintenance of its rulership. The development of the Bolshevik bureaucracy in Russia under the alleged dictatorship of the proletariat - which has never been anything but the dictatorship of a small clique over the proletariat and the entire Russian people - is merely a new instance of an old historical experience which has repeated itself uncountable times. This new ruling class, which today is rapidly growing into a new aristocracy, is set apart from the great masses of Russian peasants and workers just as clearly as are the privileged castes and classes in other countries from the mass of their peoples.

It could perhaps be objected that the new Russian commissarocracy cannot be put upon the same footing as the powerful financial and industrial oligarchies of capitalist states. But the objection will not hold. It is not the size nor the extent of the privilege that matters, but its immediate effect on the daily life of the average human being. An American working-man who, under moderately decent working conditions, earns enough to feed, clothe, and house himself humanly and has enough left over to provide himself with some cultured enjoyments, feels the possession of millions by the Mellons and Morgans less than a man who earns hardly enough to satisfy his most urgent necessities feels the privileges of a little caste of bureaucrats, even if these are not millionaires. People who can scarcely get enough dry bread to satisfy their hunger, who live in squalid rooms which they are often obliged to share with strangers, and who, on top of this, are compelled to work under an intensified speed-up system which raises their productive capacity to the utmost, can but feel the privileges of an upper class which lacks nothing, much more keenly than their class comrades in capitalist countries. And this situation becomes still more unbearable when a despotic state denies to the lower classes the right to complain of existing conditions, so that any protest is made at the risk of their lives.

But even a far greater degree of economic equality than exists in Russia would still be no guarantee against political and social oppression. Economic equality alone is not social liberation. It is just this which Marxism and all the other schools of authoritarian Socialism have never understood. Even in prison, in the cloister, or in the barracks one finds a fairly high degree of economic equality, as all the inmates are provided with the same dwelling, the same food, the same uniform, and the same tasks. The ancient Inca state in Peru and the

Jesuit state in Paraguay had brought equal economic provision for every inhabitant to a fixed system, but in spite of this the vilest despotism prevailed there, and the human being was merely the automaton of a high will, on whose decisions he had not the slightest influence. It was not without reason that Proudhon saw in a 'Socialism' without freedom the worst form of slavery. The urge for social justice can only develop properly and be effective, when it grows out of man's sense of personal freedom and is based on that. In other words Socialism will be free, or it will not be at all. In its recognition of this lies the genuine and profound justification for the existence of Anarchism.

Institutions serve the same purpose in the life of society as bodily organs do in plants or animals - they are the organs of the social body. Organs do not arise arbitrarily, but because of the

definite necessities of the physical and social environment. The eye of a deep-sea fish is formed very differently from that of an animal that lives on land, because it has to satisfy quite different demands. Changed conditions of life produce changed organs. But an organ always performs the function it was evolved to perform, or a related one. And it gradually disappears or becomes rudimentary as soon as its function is no longer necessary to the organism. But an organ never takes on a function that does not accord with its proper purpose.

The same is true of social institutions. They, too, do not arise arbitrarily, but are called into being by special social needs to serve definite purposes. In this way the modern state was evolved after monopoly economy, and the class divisions associated with it, had begun to make themselves more and more conspicuous in the framework of the old social order. The newly arisen possessing classes had need of a political instrument of power to maintain their economic and social privileges over the masses of their own people, and to impose them from without on other groups of human beings. Thus arose the appropriate social conditions for the evolution of the modern state, as the organ of political power of privileged castes and classes for the forcible subjugation and oppression of the non-possessing classes. This task is the political lifework of the state, the essential reason for its existing at all. And to this task it has always remained faithful, must remain faithful, for it cannot escape from its skin.

Its external forms have altered in the course of its historical development, but its functions have always remained the same. They have even been constantly broadened in just the measure in which its supporters have succeeded in making further fields of social activity subservient to their ends. Whether the state be monarchy or republic, whether historically it is anchored in an autocracy or in a national constitution, its function remains always the same. And just as the functions of the bodily organs of plants and animals cannot be arbitrarily altered, so that, for example, one cannot at will hear with his eyes and see with his ears, so also one cannot at pleasure transform an organ of social oppression into an instrument for the liberation of the oppressed. The state can only be what it is: the defender of mass-exploitation and social privileges, and creator of privileged classes and castes and of new monopolies. Who fails to recognise this function of the state does not understand the real nature of the present social order at all, and is incapable of pointing out to humanity new outlooks for its social evolution.

Anarchism is no patent solution for all human problems, no Utopia of a perfect social order, as it has so often been called, since on principle it rejects all absolute schemes and concepts. It does not believe in any absolute truth, or in definite final goals for human development, but in an unlimited perfectibility of social arrangements and human living conditions, which are always straining after higher forms of expression, and to which for this reason one cannot assign no definite terminus nor set any fixed goal. The worst crime of every type of state is just that it always tries to force the rich diversity of social life into definite forms and adjust it to one particular form, which allows for no wider outlook and regards the previously existing status as finished. The stronger its supporters feel them-

selves, the more completely they succeed in bringing every field of social life into their service, the more crippling is their influence on the operation of all creative cultural forces, and more unwholesomely does it affect the intellectual and social development of any particular epoch. The so-called totalitarian state, which now rests like a mountain-weight upon whole peoples and tries to mould every expression of their intellectual and social life to the lifeless pattern set by a political providence, suppresses with ruthless and brutal force every effort at alteration of the existing conditions. The totalitarian state is a dire omen for our time, and shows with frightful clarity whither such a return to the barbarism of past centuries must lead. It is the triumph of the political machine over mind, the rationalizing of human thought, feeling, and behaviour according to the established rules of the officials. It is consequently the end of all truly intellectual culture.

Anarchism recognises only the relative significance of ideas, institutions, and social forms, It is, therefore, not a fixed, self-enclosed social system, but rather a definite trend in the historic development of humankind, which, in contrast with the intellectual guardianship of all clerical and governmental institutions, strives for the free unhindered unfolding of all the individual and social forces in life. Even freedom is only a relative, not an absolute concept, since it tends constantly to become broader and to affect wider circles in more manifold ways. For the Anarchist, freedom is not an abstract philosophical concept, but the vital concrete possibility for every human being to bring to full development all the powers, capacities, and talents with which nature has endowed him/her, and turn them to social account. The less this natural development of people is influenced by ecclesiastical or political guardianship, the more efficient and harmonious will human personality become, the more will it become the measure of the intellectual culture of the society in which it has grown. This is the reason why all great cultural periods in history have been periods of political weakness. And that is quite natural, for political systems are always set upon the mechanising and not upon the organic development of social forces. State and culture are in the depth of their being irreconcilable opposites. Nietzsche recognised this very clearly when he wrote: 'No one can finally spend more than he has. That holds good for individuals; it holds good for peoples. If one spends oneself for power, for high politics, for agriculture, for commerce, parliamentarianism, military interests - if one gives away that amount of reason, earnestness, will, self-mastery, which constitutes one's real self for one thing, he will not have it for the other. Culture and the state - let no one be deceived about this - are antagonists: the 'Culture State' is merely a modern idea. The one lives on the other, the one prospers at the expense of the other. All great periods of culture are periods of political decline.

Whatever is great in a cultured sense is non-political, is even anti-political.' A powerful state mechanism is the greatest hindrance to any higher cultural development. Where the state has been attacked by internal decay, where the influence of political power on the creative forces in society is reduced to a minimum, there culture thrives best, for political rulership always strives for uniformity and tends to subject every aspect of social life to its guardianship. And in this it finds itself in inescapable contradiction to the creative aspirations of cultural development, which is always on the quest after new forms and fields of social activity, and for which freedom of expression, the many-sidedness and the kaleidoscopic changes of things,

are just as vitally necessary as rigid forms, dead rules, and the forcible suppression of every manifestation of social life which are in contradiction to it.

Every culture, if its natural development is not too much affected by political restrictions, experiences a perpetual renewal of the formative urge, and out of that comes an ever growing diversity of creative activity. Every successful piece of work stirs the desire for greater perfection and deeper inspiration; each new form becomes the herald of new possibilities of development. But the state creates no culture, as is so often thoughtlessly asserted, it only tries to keep things as they are, safely anchored to stereotypes. That has been the reason for all revolutions in history.

Power operates only destructively, bent always on forcing every manifestation of life into the straitjacket of its laws. Its intellectual form of expression is dead dogma, its physical form brute force. And this unintelligence of its objectives sets its stamp on its supporters also and renders them stupid and brutal, even when they were originally endowed with the best of talents. One who is constantly striving to force everything into a mechanical order at last becomes a machine himself and loses all human feeling. It was from the understanding of this that modern anarchism was born and now draws its moral force. Only freedom can inspire men to great things and bring about social and intellectual transformations. The art of ruling men has never been the art of educating men and inspiring them to a new shaping of their lives. Dreary compulsion has at its command only lifeless drill, which smotherers any vital initiative at its birth and can bring forth only subjects, not free men. Freedom is the very essence of life, the impelling force in all intellectual and social development, the creator of every new outlook for the future of mankind. The liberation of man from economic exploitation and from intellectual and political oppression, which finds its finest expression in the world-philosophy of Anarchism, is the first prerequisite for the evolution of a higher social culture and a new humanity.

-R. Rocker.

MARTYN EVERETT'S introduction to RUDOLF ROCKER (1873-1958)

Rudolf Rocker was born to working-class parents at Mainz, in Southern Germany, but was orphaned by the age of 10. As a young book-binder he joined the socialist SPD and was influenced by the anti-bureaucratic 'Jungen' group which was eventually expelled from the party before he was converted to anarchism while a delegate at the strife-torn 1891 Brussels Congress of the Second international.

In 1892 Rocker narrowly escaped arrest for illegal propaganda work, and fled Germany for Paris, before moving to London in 1895. In London he became involved with the Jewish anarchists in the East End whose activities centred around the Yiddish journal *Der Arbeiter Frint* (The Workers Friend). Rocker learned Yiddish and began contributing to *Der Arbeiter Frint* in 1896, but two years later he moved briefly to Liverpool, where he became an editor of *Dos Friei Vort* (The Free World), before returning to London to become the editor of *Der Arbeiter Frint*.

When, in 1912, the workers in the East End sweatshops went on strike, Rocker immediately transformed *Der Arbeiter Frint* into a daily paper for the strikers' cause, contributing considerably to their eventual victory. With the outbreak of war in 1914 Rocker was interned as an enemy alien and held in the Alexandra Palace internment camp despite his continuing opposition to

both the German state and its authoritarianism. He was eventually released in Holland during 1918, as part of a negotiated exchange of prisoners.

Returning to Germany on the eve of revolution, Rocker joined the anti-war syndicalists of the Freie Vereinigung deutscher Gewerkschaften (Free Association of German Trade Unions) which had operated on a clandestine basis since its suppression in 1914. Illness prevented real activity until March 1919, by which time the revolution had been all but crushed. Rocker toured Germany, addressing meetings throughout the country, and contributing to *Der Syndikalist*, which was briefly suppressed by the Social Democratic government in 1920. Rocker and the editor, Fritz Kater, were arrested but later released.

Working with the Freie Arbeiter-Union, the successor to the FVDG, Rocker continued to write for *Der Syndikalist*, and also wrote a whole series of books including biographies of the controversial Johann Most, and the anarchist historian and activist, Max Nettlau, as well as one of the first systematic left-wing critiques of the Bolshevik dictatorship in Russia, *Der Bankrott des Russischen Sozialismus*. After the Reichstag fire, Rocker fled from Germany to Switzerland, and then to stay with Emma Goldman in the south of France. After attending a number of anarchist conferences he departed for the USA, where he spent the last 25 years of his life. He undertook many lengthy lecture tours in the United States, and remained a prolific journalist, contributing countless articles to the anarchist press in many countries, until his death in 1958.

Instrumental in establishing the anarcho-syndicalist international, the International Workers' Association (IWA-AIT), founded in 1922, Rocker was a tireless propagandist for anarcho-syndicalism. *Anarcho-Syndicalism: Theory and Practice*, (originally published in 1938, and republished in a second, expanded edition, in India, in 1947), 'draws in the practice and methods of anarcho-syndicalism, and places them squarely in the context of the historical development of workers struggles to provide one of the most lively and coherent accounts of anarcho-syndicalism ever written. Although published fifty years ago, and in spite of its contemporary attachment to productivism it remains as vital and relevant as when first written.

THE ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST MOVEMENT In Britain the syndicalist movement of 1909-1914 is often presented as a precursor of left-wing labourism, yet its content, and many of its leading organisers were decidedly anarchist. Triggered by Sam Mainwaring's short-lived paper, *General Strike* (which he edited with the Spanish exile, Tarrida del Marmol) the anarchists, through publications like the *Voice of Labour* and the *Syndicalist*, built on the practice of comrades such as Mainwaring, Rocker and John Turner, who had been active in industrial organising, to create a mass movement which in Britain, remains almost unparalleled in its combativity. Reinforced by contact with anarcho-syndicalists in France, and members of the American Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), this activity continued throughout and immediately after World War I, and was only finally exhausted by the incorporation of many active anarchists and syndicalists into the newly formed Communist Party, in the mistaken belief that the Bolsheviks had instituted workers control in Soviet Russia.

The inter-war years were; consequently, marked by an almost total absence of anarcho-syndicalist propaganda. Only in Glasgow did the anarchists maintain any industrial influence, while the mid-thirties saw a resurgence of interest in anarcho-syndicalism, with the formation of the Syndicalist

Propaganda League, and the attempts of Spain and the World and subsequently both *Revolt* and *War Commentary*) to popularise anarcho-syndicalist principles, and encourage support for the Spanish CNT, it was only after World War II that active anarchist-syndicalist currents re-emerged, smaller in size and impact, although occasionally gaining an influence far greater than the small number of activists would suggest; as with the Rank and File organisation sponsored by the Syndicalist Workers Federation, and Albert Meltzer's *Ludd*, which was issued during the sixties dock strike.

At present, it is the Direct Action Movement, (the British section of the IWA), which is the exponent of anarcho-syndicalism in Britain. Although primarily a propaganda organisation, its members have given a high priority to solidarity with workers engaged in industrial disputes or on strike, notably to the Ardbridge workers in Scotland, Silent Night workers and the Adenbrookes Hospital cleaners. During the coal miners' strike DAM members and supporters played an increasingly active role in supporting strikers, joining picket lines, raising cash (both in Britain and abroad, through the IWA), by organising speaking tours here and throughout Europe, and by direct action initiatives. Even with the collapse of the strike, DAM members have continued to support miners and their families in a number of ways, including the provision of support to miners imprisoned or victimised by the Coal Board.

Internationally the anarcho-syndicalist movement was physically destroyed: crushed by fascist dictatorships, and by authoritarian socialist regimes alike, with the result that the significant movements described by Rocker in chapter six, did not survive the Second World War or its aftermath. Indeed, even as Rocker was writing, the Spanish CNT was being attacked by its supposed allies, the Spanish Communists and many of its most active members murdered, even before the destruction wreaked by a victorious Spanish fascism.

Although the International survived the war it was increasingly weakened, and by the 1960s consisted of little more than a network of propaganda groups. The re-emergence of the Spanish CNT after the bleak twilight of the Franco dictatorship inspired the reactivation of moribund sections of the IWA, and the formation of new sections. Consequently the different sections of the International are once again active in the exchange of information, and the provision of mutual assistance to workers in struggle.

THE RELEVANCE OF ANARCHO-SYNDICALISM- The world is in crisis, and the overthrow of capitalism, in all its many and varied forms, is now essential in order to ensure the survival of the planet. Traditional socialist movements, based on statism, and narrow sectional interests, are unable to respond to the needs of humanity and the environment. Indeed, they have been the staunchest defenders of capitalist industrialism.

Historically the oppressed and the disaffected have rallied to the standard of socialism because of its oppositional position within capitalism—an oppositional position which provides the appearance of a radicalism it did not possess. During periods of revolutionary potential, however, people see opportunities to go beyond attempts to ameliorate capitalism, and to instead abolish it altogether. It is important to realise, however, that this is not usually an apocalyptic conversion into revolutionary activity, but is an emerging process involving continual, but unsuccessful attempts to reconstruct a movement of socialist opposition, find new forms of organisation and activity as well as new forms of protest and expression. New movements appear, representing the

interests of groups which have not previously confronted capital, and so lack the burden of tradition and the 'password' phraseology of socialism, but which nonetheless possess greater potential for revolution. New ideas and new forms of organisation flourish.

In our own time, the ecological movement, the women's movement, the peace movement and the 'impossible' class emerging in the urban centres represent examples of this process. Yet for all their successes, they remain unable to mount an effective challenge to the central dynamic of capitalist industrialism and are now in danger of being incorporated into the system as a necessary corrective to its most obvious abuses. It is only while they remain anti-statist that these movements will be able to resist pressures for incorporation, gradual accommodation within the system and eventual failure of their attempts to reconstruct human society.

Anarchism is the natural ally of these movements. Its stress on spontaneity, pluralism, internationalism and the reconstruction of community; its belief in the basic antagonism between state and society; and its anti-dogmatism, all lend themselves to developing opposition to capitalism across the widest possible front. The history of anarchism can also inform the new social movements, and suggest possible strategies for social change. In this respect particular emphasis must be placed on anarcho-syndicalism, which remains the only sustained attempt to come to grips with capitalist industrialisation. Its focus on the need for workers and the community to collectively control and transform the work process remains central to any attempt to change society. For the problem of production lies at the heart of the worldwide crisis—not in the simplistic sense that it has been interpreted by those socialists and state capitalists who would attempt to manage capitalism better than the private capitalists can—ie by continually increasing production while curbing its more obvious (but not worse) excesses—but because the operation and impact of capitalist industrialisation now threatens the very basis of life on earth.

Industrialism is the physical manifestation of capitalism and is the mechanism by which the whole system is maintained (although, as more than a score of dictatorships testify, a rude militaristic fascism is frequently used to reinforce the system in times of local crisis). As Murray Bookchin has pointed out, the factory should be seen not as a neutral unit of production, but as an agency of social control. Factories do not exist in a social vacuum, but are part of a much larger network of workplaces and processes, forming a whole system of social control. They are not institutions that can be seized and operated for truly revolutionary purposes.

It is in this respect that anarcho-syndicalism has often been misinterpreted, by its supporters as well as its detractors, for anarcho-syndicalism is not about seizing control of capitalist industry, and managing it better, and it should not be confused with the restricted concept of workers's control. It is a way of challenging the whole basis of industrial production. As Rocker explains, anarcho-syndicalism is not a narrow ideal with limited goals, but rather a programme for the destruction of capitalism and the regeneration of human community based on the concept of social self-management.

It has been fashionable to reject any role for the working class in the struggle for social revolution. Both Murray Bookchin and Andre Gorz have argued that with the incorporation and containment of class conflict within the system, and the marginalisation that has been engendered by unemployment and the introduction of new technology, the social movements discussed above have now become the agents of revolution and social transformation. Although there exists a kernel of truth in this argument, both Bookchin and Gorz miss the point that it is precisely the central relation of the working class to

the industrial system which makes its role vital to the success of the new social movements. In classical anarcho-syndicalist terms the workers economic and social power has to be counterposed to the financial and military power of the state and the ruling class. Because of the extent of the development of the industrial system and its impact on both humanity and the environment, as well as its function as an agency of social enslavement, working class potential for action is now primarily a negative one. Stop the system.

The new social movements don't represent the replacement of one form of struggle by another, but an extension of the same struggle into new areas. At the same time, because of the comparative autonomy exercised by the new movements they can provide industrial workers with the social space and support to challenge capitalism more effectively. It is precisely in order to overcome the divisions between workers and community that anarcho-syndicalist methods and structures have been created. Isolated groups of workers, isolated women, isolated anti-militarists, can all be crushed by the system, Together—we're unstoppable!

--Martyn Everett

EMMA GOLDMAN

Essay from Mother Earth from 1913

Syndicalism: Its Theory and Practice

In view of the fact that the ideas embodied in Syndicalism have been practiced by the workers for the last half century, even if without the background of social consciousness; that in this country five men had to pay with their lives because they advocated Syndicalist methods as the most effective in the struggle of labor against capital; and that, furthermore, Syndicalism has been consciously practiced by the workers of France, Italy and Spain since 1895, it is rather amusing to witness some people in America and England now swooping down upon Syndicalism as a perfectly new and never before heard-of proposition.

It is astonishing how very naive Americans are, how crude and immature in matters of international importance. For all his boasted practical aptitude, the average American is the very last to learn of the modern means and tactics employed in the great struggles of his day. Always he lags behind in ideas and methods that the European workers have for years past been applying with great success.

It may be contended, of course, that this is merely a sign of youth on the part of the American. And it is indeed beautiful to possess a young mind, fresh to receive and perceive. But unfortunately the American mind seems never to grow, to mature and crystallize its views.

Perhaps that is why an American revolutionist can at the same time be a politician. That is also the reason why leaders of the Industrial Workers of the World continue in the Socialist party, which is antagonistic to the principles as well as to the activities of the I.W.W. Also why a rigid Marxian may propose that the Anarchists work together with the faction that began its career by a most bitter and malicious persecution of one of the pioneers of Anarchism, Michael Bakunin. In short, to the indefinite, uncertain mind of the American radical the most contradictory ideas and

methods are possible. The result is a sad chaos in the radical movement, a sort of intellectual hash, which has neither taste nor character.

Just at present Syndicalism is the pastime of a great many Americans, so-called intellectuals. Not that they know anything about it, except that some great authorities-Sorel, Bergson and others-stand for it: because the American needs the seal of authority, or he would not accept an idea, no matter how true and valuable it might be.

Our bourgeois magazines are full of dissertations on Syndicalism. One of our most conservative colleges has even gone to the extent of publishing a work of one of its students on the subject, which has the approval of a professor. And all this, not because Syndicalism is a force and is being successfully practiced by the workers of Europe, but because-as I said before-it has official authoritative sanction.

As if Syndicalism had been discovered by the philosophy of Bergson or the theoretic discourses of Sorel and Berth, and had not existed and lived among the workers long before these men wrote about it. The feature which distinguishes Syndicalism from most philosophies is that it represents the revolutionary philosophy of labor conceived and born in the actual Struggle and experience of the workers themselves-not in universities, colleges, libraries, or in the brain of some scientists. The revolutionary philosophy of labor, that is the true and vital meaning of Syndicalism.

Already as far back as 1848 a large section of the workers realized the utter futility of political activity as a means of helping them in their economic struggle. At that time already the demand went forth for direct economic measures, as against the useless waste of energy along political lines. This was the case not only in France, but even prior to that, in England, where Robert Owen, the true revolutionary Socialist, propagated similar ideas.

After years of agitation and experiment the idea was incorporated by the first convention of the Internationale in 1867, in the resolution that the economic emancipation of the workers must be the principal aim of all revolutionists, to which everything else is to be subordinated.

In fact, it was this determined radical stand which eventually brought about the split in the revolutionary movement of that day, and its division into two factions: the one, under Marx and Engels, aiming at political conquest; the other, under Bakunin and the Latin workers, forging ahead along industrial and Syndicalist lines. The further development of those two wings is familiar to every thinking man and woman: the one has gradually centralized into a huge machine, with the sole purpose of conquering political power within the existing capitalist State; the other is becoming an ever more vital revolutionary factor, dreaded by the enemy as the greatest menace to its rule.

It was in the year 1900, while a delegate to the Anarchist Congress in Paris, that I first came in contact with Syndicalism in operation. The Anarchist press had been discussing the subject for years prior to that; therefore we Anarchists knew something about Syndicalism. But those of us who lived in America had to content ourselves with the theoretic side of it.

In 1900, however, I saw its effect upon labor in France: the strength, the enthusiasm and hope with which Syndicalism inspired the workers. It was also my good fortune to learn of the man who more than anyone else had directed Syndicalism into definite working channels, Fernand Pelloutier. Unfortunately, I could not meet this remarkable young man, as he was at that time already very ill with cancer. But wherever I went, with whom-ever I spoke, the love and devotion for Pelloutier was wonderful, all agreeing that it was he who had gathered the discontented forces in the French labor movement and imbued them with new life and a new purpose, that of Syndicalism.

On my return to America I immediately began to propagate Syndicalist ideas, especially Direct Action and the General Strike. But it was like talking to the Rocky Mountains-no understanding, even among the more radical elements, and complete indifference in labor ranks.

In 1907 I went as a delegate to the Anarchist Congress at Amsterdam and, while in Paris, met the most active Syndicalists in the Confederation Generale du Travail: Pouget, Delesalle, Monate, and many others. More than that, I had the opportunity to see Syndicalism in daily operation, in its most constructive and inspiring forms.

I allude to this to indicate that my knowledge of Syndicalism does not come from Sorel, Bergson or Berth, but from actual contact with and observation of the tremendous work carried on by the workers of Paris within the ranks of the Confederation. It would require a volume to explain in detail what Syndicalism is doing for the French workers. In the American press you read only of its resistive methods, of strikes and sabotage, of the conflicts of labor with capital. These are no doubt very important matters, and yet the chief value of Syndicalism lies much deeper. It lies in the constructive and educational effect upon the life and thought of the masses.

The fundamental difference between Syndicalism and the old trade methods is this: while the old trade unions, without exception, move within the wage system and capitalism, recognizing the latter as inevitable, Syndicalism repudiates and condemns present industrial arrangements as unjust and criminal, and holds out no hope to the worker for lasting results from this system.

Of course Syndicalism, like the old trade unions, fights for immediate gains, but it is not stupid enough to pretend that labor can expect humane conditions from inhuman economic arrangements in society. Thus it merely wrests from the enemy what it can force him to yield; on the whole, however, Syndicalism aims at, and concentrates its energies upon, the complete overthrow of the wage system. Indeed, Syndicalism goes further: it aims to liberate labor from every institution that has not for its object the free development of production for the benefit of all humanity. In short, the ultimate purpose of Syndicalism is to reconstruct society from its present centralized, authoritative and brutal state to one based upon the free, federated grouping of the workers along lines of economic and social liberty.

With this object in view, Syndicalism works in two directions: first, by undermining the existing institutions; secondly, by developing and educating the workers and cultivating their spirit of solidarity, to prepare them for a full, free life, when capitalism shall have been abolished.

Syndicalism is, in essence, the economic expression of Anarchism. That circumstance accounts for the presence of so many Anarchists in the Syndicalist movement. Like Anarchism, Syndicalism prepares the workers along direct economic lines, as conscious factors in the great struggles of to-day, as well as conscious factors in the task of reconstructing society along autonomous industrial lines, as against the paralyzing spirit of centralization with its bureaucratic machinery of corruption, inherent in all political parties.

Tom Brown's Syndicalism

by Phoenix Press (a clear headed 100 page pamphlet book by a Brit anarchist who was active from the 20's to the 60's)

Principles of Syndicalism Defending the Revolution

The Syndicalist objectives we have outlined in previous articles will not, of course, be carried out without arousing the fiercest opposition and most bitter hatred of the employing class. The expropriation of that class, the control of industry by the workers, the abolition of money and the wage system and the establishment of the principle of each according to his need can only be when we are prepared for the most revolutionary of struggles.

Our first weapon is the highest technical development of the principle of non-co-operation; cutting of economic supplies and services from the employing class and switching them to the workers; generally, refusing to do any work for or co-operate in any way in the observation of the laws and orders of the employers. We do not need to be warned that the enemy will not, if our forces be weak enough, willingly accept this new condition. We know that he will if possible use against us the armed forces, the police and Fascist bands. But, acute social problems, particularly in the 20th century, sweep across the whole population including the armed forces. The Revolution will have as many adherents within the armed forces as it will have in the civil population. Nevertheless the Revolution must be defended, by armed force if necessary, against those remnants of the armed forces the enemy may rally and against the Fascist militia, 'Black and Tans' or whatever they may call the new counter-revolutionist army they may raise.

To that threat the Syndicalist reply is the creation of the Workers' Militia. The chief base of the new workers' army will be the place of work, factory, garage, mill, pit or dock. There men know one another, know the man who is loyal to his class and he who might be

ROGUE STATES

The Rule of Force in World Affairs

by Noam Chomsky \$16 -South End Press

- what you missed in the mainstream 'news' about 1999-
"The US and its allies come in for particular scrutiny for their numerous blatant violations of the very international laws they claim to uphold."

I get all his stuff, as you probably figure, so if you're new to this realm of true life and facts, I suggest, after this book, going with older Chomsky stuff: "The Washington Connection", "Turning The Tide (Central America)" (both South End Press too) or the 90's Detering Democracy" or "Year 501; the Conquest Continues" (at his most bitter!) Available at Modern Times Bookstore in SF, and through AK press, and Left Bank Books.

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tommy's idea box #1: (Goofus steals your books for heroin; Gallant suggests ways to increase your intellectual resources!)

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Rattle and #1 page 15

a counter-revolutionist. Already a high degree of self and group discipline and of working and struggling together have been practiced. In the Spanish Civil War of 1936 the Workers' Militia was largely based on the squad of ten men known to one another and choosing their own squad leader or delegate. The squads of ten men were united into centurias of one hundred men and seven or eight centurias formed into a column, all on the federal principle.

The choice of the factory, etc., as the chief base of the Militia has an extra advantage in the present day warfare of highly mechanised forces. Thus, shipyard, dock and seamen's syndicates form naval units; bus and lorry drivers - transport and mechanised units; miners, bridge builders and construction workers - engineer battalions and so on. Not only is the skill and experience already assembled, but, also, the necessary machines are at hand to these units. Further, an industrial population can be trained much quicker than an agrarian populace in the use of weapons, for a gun is just another machine.

As to the arming of the workers, the approach of revolutionary struggles has always forced the workers to acquire small arms in their own defence, for the impending struggle has usually been anticipated by Fascist squads, 'Black Hundreds', 'Black and Tans' or other named terrorist bands of the ruling class. But such arms are few in the aggregate. The chief sources of supply of modern revolutionary forces are the class-conscious units of the army, and the factories. In modern revolutions the munition factories take the place of the armouries and gunsmiths' shops of the 18th and 19th centuries. Not only the munition works, but every engineering factory, workshop or chemical works, is turned to the manufacture or improvisation of weapons.

Highly industrialised countries such as France, Belgium, U.S.A., Germany and others will not suffer the tragic lack of the means of forging arms suffered by agrarian, revolutionary Spain in 1936.

Armchair Socialist theoreticians and Anti-Fascists will sneer at the Workers' Militia and tell us that the barricades of 1848 are outdated, but revolutions have a way of taking these fine weather men unawares. Some years ago the celebrated Anti-Fascist and Liberal Professor Salvemini wrote a learned article against the principle of workers' defence forces. He pointed out that the German Social-Democratic Reichsbanner, the German Communist Rotfront, and similar military organisations of the Liberal and Catholic parties in Germany had surrendered or dissolved without firing a shot when the Nazis took power in 1933. Therefore, reasoned the learned professor, workers' defence corps are useless. The advice of such gentle Anti-Fascists is to call a policeman.

What the professor concealed was that the Social Democratic Reichsbanner and the Communist League of Red Front Fighters did not fight because they were built upon authoritarian principles of orders from above and rigid obedience to leaders. The Socialist leaders were too compromised by political practice to give orders to resist the Nazis. The German Communist leaders were under orders from Moscow, and Stalin wished to, and did, make a treaty with the new Nazi Germany. It was not the principle of workers' defence which failed, but the contrary principle of blind obedience to 'leaders' and the subjection of judgement and self respect to that 'leadership'.

Within a few years of Salvemini's article came the Spanish Fascist uprising of July, 1936. The spontaneous uprising of the workers in defence against Fascism and the rapid organisation of workers' militia, not authoritarian as the German, but federal and Syndicalist, blew to smithereens the learned discourse of the professor. Life is stronger than theory.

The revolutionary workers everywhere in Spain were rapidly defeating the Fascists when foreign intervention, allowed by the Labour movement of the world, came to the assistance of Franco. The defeat of the Revolution after three years of war was due to that, to the Franco-British policy of 'non-intervention' which allowed arms to Franco, but prevented arms and war supplies reaching the republicans. The efficacy of workers' militia as a defence against Fascist

terrorism remains proved by the events of 1936.

We shall anticipate the objections of legalistic Socialists and Liberals who will be ready with tales of 'the streets running with blood and corpses mountain high' by recalling that most revolutions have overthrown the old regime with the loss of a handful of men. The French Revolution of 1789, the overthrow of Tsarism and the October Revolution in 1917, the Austrian and German Revolutions of 1918, were accomplished with an almost unbelievably small roll of casualties.

Of course, if the revolutionaries fight as do the professional armies of states, with a solid front and two armies facing one another with tanks, aircraft and big guns, the revolution would be quickly crushed. But, revolutions cannot be fought like imperialist wars, the social factors are greater than the military. Strategy, tactics and weapons must be designed to wage a social war without fronts. An excellent case of this is found in the history of the Irish struggle against the British Government during 1919-20 and 1921. The Imperialist forces were increased to about 100,000 men, army, Royal Irish Constabulary, Auxiliaries and 'Black and Tans', with resort to any weapon they needed and the experience of the World War behind them. The Irish Republican Army of about 10,000 armed with automatic pistols, revolvers, home made bombs and a few rifles and machine guns defeated them by adapting their strategy and tactics to the social soil.

Let no one mistake the Workers' Militia for just another army. The Spanish Militia of 1936-37 had no officer caste or badge of rank, no privilege or special ration, no saluting. The ranks were filled, not by conscription, but by the revolutionary knowledge and enthusiasm of the workers. Love of the Revolution took the place of professional military discipline founded on the death penalty. The daily pay was equal to all whether the least experienced militiaman or Durruti. As well as the Workers' Militia, other bodies of armed men were organised by the Spanish Syndicalists - Frontier Control Committees to easily handle such who would overthrow or discredit the Revolution.

It is obviously necessary for the Revolution to disband the regiments of the old regime, the judges, magistrates and police. But as well as counter-revolutionist attempts, criminal and hooligan elements useless to anyone, may remain as the legacy of capitalism. Indeed the counter-revolutionists will encourage these by bribes, arms and alcohol. The Workers' Patrols organised by the ward and town federations of the Syndicates will easily handle such who would overthrow or discredit the Revolution.

It will be seen that these armed bodies of workers have no resemblance to the forces of the State - capitalist or other. The street patrols will be carried out in the worker's spare time, like firewatching - only of his own free will. The factories and railways will be guarded by armed workers while doing their everyday work. They will continue to carry arms until the need has passed. Then, with no danger present, men will cease to carry arms as they ceased to carry gas masks when they found no danger of gas attack.

But, if, instead of the general force of the workers, the Revolution gives birth to the special force of a new army, police and judiciary, a new state and a new master class will arise. If a new police force were created to arrest counter-revolutionists the policemen would naturally try to preserve their new jobs even when the old regime had been crushed. Let us recall the story of Napoleon's wolves. It is said that while Napoleon was Emperor the number of wolves increased in France, so Napoleon offered a large reward for each wolf's head brought to the local authority. Wolf hunting became a lucrative profession until the wolves began to disappear. Fortunately for the hunters the decline in the wolf population was mysteriously checked and

their numbers even began to increase. Upon investigation the authorities discovered that, rather than lose their jobs, the hunters were breeding wolves and even shepherds had turned from their flocks for the more remunerative work of wolf breeding and hunting.

For the defence of the Revolution there must be no new regular army, or police force, or officer caste, but the arming of the workers. If the workers allow themselves to be disarmed, even in the name of the Revolution, then at that moment the counter-revolution has succeeded. defence against Fascism and the rapid organisation of workers' militia, not authoritarian as the German, but federal and Syndicalist, blew to smithereens the learned discourse of the professor. Life is stronger than theory.

The revolutionary workers everywhere in Spain were rapidly defeating the Fascists when foreign intervention, allowed by the Labour movement of the world, came to the assistance of Franco. The defeat of the Revolution after three years of war was due to that, to the Franco-British policy of 'non-intervention' which allowed arms to Franco, but prevented arms and war supplies reaching the republicans. The efficacy of workers' militia as a defence against Fascist terrorism remains proved by the events of 1936.

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"True Democracy needs no Jeffersonian *imprimatur*; Thomas Jefferson's notion of liberty was not extended to his slaves. George Washington, father of the American nation, set the tone for every president save Franklin Roosevelt, 'Indians,' he said, 'have nothing human except the shape...the gradual extension of our settlements will as certainly cause the savage, as the wolf, to retire; both being beasts of prey though they differ in shape.' James Madison was less crude, though no less honest, when, in addressing the Constitutional Convention in 1787, he said the aim of the new republic was 'to protect the minority of the opulent against the majority'."

(John Pilger *Hidden Agendas*)

What is American Literature?

(asked of Nelson Algren in the 50s)

Nelson Algren: "...it....is the woman in the courtroom who, finding herself undefended on a charge, asked

"Isn't anybody on my side?"

It's also the phrase I used that was once used in court of a kid who, on being sentenced to death, said,

"I knew I'd never get to be twenty-one anyhow."

More recently I think American literature is also the fifteen-year-old who, after he had stabbed somebody said,

"Put me in the electric chair--my mother can watch me burn."

Errico Malatesta (1835-1932) by Daniel Guerin from **No Gods No Masters** book two (AK press)

"The First World War found him faithful to working class internationalism and he indignantly upbraided Kropotkin for his support for the war (See below). By the end of 1919 he was able to leave London to return to Italy, where he was greeted by enthusiastic crowds. The *Corriere della Sera* of January 20, 1920 portrayed him as "one of the greatest figures in Italian life." His newspaper *Umanita Novo* had a print-run of 50,000 copies and he became a leading light of an anarchosyndicalist labor organization, the *Unione Sinclacalista Italiana* (USI).

The years 1919 to 1922 saw Malatesta at the height of his career as a revolutionary militant and agitator. He transferred his newspaper to Rome and attempted to conclude an antifascist "Labor Alliance" with the political parties and trade unions: in July 1922, the Alliance called a general strike, but the attempt was smashed by the rising power of the fascist blackshirts. *Umanita Novo* was banned shortly after the March on Rome and Malatesta's picture was burned in public. Even so, he managed to bring out a bimonthly review, *Pensiero e Volonta*, in 1924: though frequently censored, it survived into 1926. It carried articles of consummate maturity from him.

From the end of 1926 onwards, the aged Malatesta, whom fascist totalitarianism had reduced to silence (except for a few articles which he managed to smuggle out of the country), was living under house arrest, which is what stopped him from joining the republican revolution in Spain in 1931 as he would have wished. He died on July 22, 1932."

from *L'Agitazione*, June 1897 **Errico Malatesta**

REVOLUTION AND REACTION

Revolution: is the creation of new, living institutions, new groupings and new social relations. It is also the destruction of privilege and monopoly, the spirit of a new justice and fraternity, of that liberty which should overhaul the whole life of society, the moral level and material circumstances of the masses, prompting them to look to their own future through intelligent direct action.

Revolution: is organization of all public services by those working in them, in their own interest as much as in the public's interest.

Revolution: is abolition of all constraint, autonomy for groups, communes and regions.

Revolution: is free federation conjured into existence by the yearning for human brotherhood, by individual and collective interests and by the demands of production and defense.

Revolution: is the constitution of countless free groupings rooted in such ideas, desires and tastes of all sorts as are to be found in men.

Revolution: is the formation and proliferation of thousands of communal, regional and national representative bodies which, while possessed of no legislative authority, are of service in articulating and coordinating people's wishes, over short distances and long, operating by means of reports, advice and example.

Revolution: is liberty tempered in the crucible of action: it survives as long as independence does, which is to say, until such time as others, seizing upon the weariness descending upon the masses, and the inevitable disappointment that comes in the wake of the unduly high hopes, probable errors and failings of men, manage to found a power which, sustained by an army of conscripts or mercenaries, lays down the law and halts the movement in its tracks, at which point the reaction begins.

ORGANIZATION WITHOUT AUTHORITY

Believing, under the sway of received authoritarian education, that authority is the essence of social organization, they [certain anarchists] have, in order to combat the former, resisted and denied the latter (...) The fundamental error of those anarchists who are opposed to organization is believing that organization is not feasible without authority and, having once accepted that hypothesis, preferring to abjure all organization rather than countenance the slightest authority (...) If we held that organization could not exist without authority, we would be authoritarians, because we would still prefer the authority that hobbles life and makes it miserable over the dis-organization that renders it an impossibility.

ON THE NECESSITY OF ORGANIZATION

-Errico Malatesta anarchie et Organisation 1927

Organization is only the practice of cooperation and solidarity, the natural and necessary condition of social life, an ineluctable fact forcing itself upon everyone, upon human society generally as well as upon any group of people with a common aim to strive for.

Man does not wish, nor has he the ability, to live in isolation. He cannot even become truly a man and meet his material and moral requirements other than in society and through cooperation with his fellows. So it is inevitable that all who do not organize themselves freely, either because they cannot, or because they are not alive to the urgent necessity of so doing, should have to endure the organization established by other individuals ordinarily constituted as a ruling class or group, for the purpose of exploiting other people's labor for their own benefit. And the age-old oppression of the masses by a tiny number of privileged has always been the consequence of most individuals' inability to come to some accommodation, to organize alongside other workers on the basis of shared interests and persuasions, for the purposes of production and enjoyment and self-defense against the exploiters and oppressors. Anarchism offers a remedy for this state of affairs, with its underlying principle of free organization, generated and sustained by the free will of the associated with no authority of any sort, which is to say, without any individual's having the right to foist his wishes upon anyone else. So it is only natural that anarchists should seek to apply to their private lives and party life, this very same principle upon which, they hold, the whole of human society should be founded.

Certain controversies have created the impression that there are some anarchists inimical to all organization, but in fact the many, the all too many disputations we have had upon this matter, even when they have been obscured by semantics or poisoned by personality issues, essentially have had to do with the modality and not the principle of organization. Thus some comrades who are verbally loudest in their opposition to organization organize like everyone else and, often, better than the rest, whenever they are seriously intent upon achieving something.

Voline

(excerpt from No Gods No Master by Daniel Guerin
-AK press)

...."A second Nabat congress was held in March-April 1919. Participants declared themselves to be "categorically and irreversibly opposed to all participation in the soviets, which have become purely political bodies, organized on authoritarian, centralist and Statist foundations." This declaration was very poorly received by the Bolshevik authorities.

After the congress, Voline left Moscow and went back to work with Nabat in Kursk, with the central body (for Nabat had regional bodies too). This was still a time of relative political tolerance, but it was fated not to last for much longer. Soon, the Bolshevik authorities did away with the free press, harassing and arresting the anarchists. It was at that point, July 1919, that Voline managed to link up with the headquarters of the Ukrainian anarchist guerrilla, Nestor Makhno. The intellectual with the ever-ready pen and the comparatively uncouth warrior-peasant, by virtue of the very fact that they were profoundly dissimilar, complemented each other, not that they did not clash on more than one occasion.

As the Makhnovshchina had established a cultural and educational department, Voline, in conjunction with one of Makhno's erstwhile prison acquaintances, Piotr Arshinov, took charge of it and was placed in charge of organizing meetings, conferences, lectures, popular briefings, the publication of tracts, posters and all the rest of the Makhnovists' printed output. He chaired a congress of the insurgent movement, the one held in October 1919, in Alexandrovsk. It saw the adoption of General Theses' which spelled out the doctrine of "free soviets" (See Volume IV of this anthology).

For six months, as a member of the military council, Voline beavered away unstintingly. But he was arrested by the 14th Red Army, taken to Moscow and placed in the care of the political police (Cheka). Not until October 1920 would he regain his freedom under a military agreement between the Bolshevik government and Makhno. Whereupon he traveled to Kharkov where, in concert with the Nabat Confederation, he laid the preparations for an anarchist congress scheduled for December 25. On the eve of the congress, the Bolsheviks had Voline arrested once again, along with any anarchists who had served with Makhno.

From Kharkov, the prisoners were removed to Moscow and placed in the Butyrky prison. There they mounted a hunger strike which was called off following unexpected intervention: European revolutionary syndicalist delegates who had come to attend the first congress of the Red International of Labor Unions, secured the release of ten of them, including Voline, on condition that they leave the country for good (under threat of execution should they breach this agreement)."

THE UNKNOWN REVOLUTION VOLINE AND TROTSKY

In April 1917, I happened to be in New York with Trotsky, in a printworks which worked primarily for various left wing Russian bodies. At the time, he was in charge of a left marxist daily paper, Novy Mir. As for me, the Federation of Russian Workers' Unions had

entrusted me with the editing of the final editions of its weekly, the anarcho-syndicalist Golos Truda, before its removal to Russia. I spent one night each week at the printworks, on the eve of the newspaper's coming out. And that is how I came to meet Trotsky on my first night on duty.

Naturally, we talked of the revolution. We were both making preparations to quit America shortly in order to move "over yonder."

One time I said to Trotsky: "On balance, I am absolutely sure that you left marxists will end up by taking power in Russia. It is inevitable, for the resuscitated soviets will unfailingly come into conflict with the bourgeois government. The latter will not be able to stamp them out because all of the country's toilers, workers, peasants, etc., and pretty well all of the army as well, will of course wind up siding with the soviets against the bourgeoisie and its government. Now, as soon as the people and the army support the soviets, the latter will be the winners in the struggle begun. And as soon as they win, you left marxists will inevitably be swept into power. For the toilers will assuredly carry through the revolution to its bitter end. As syndicalists and anarchists are too weak in Russia to focus the toilers' attention quickly upon their ideas, the masses will place their trust in you and you will become 'the masters of the country.' Whereupon woe betide us anarchists! It is inevitable that you and we should come into conflict. You will begin to persecute us just as soon as your power has been consolidated. And you will end by having us shot down like partridges..."

"Come, come, comrade," Trotsky replied, "You people are pig-headed and incorrigible nitwits. So, as things now stand, what is the difference between us? A little question of methodology, quite secondary. You, like us, are revolutionaries. Like you, we are anarchists, in the final analysis. The only thing is that you want to introduce your anarchism straight away, without transition or preparation. Whereas we marxists believe that one cannot "leap" into the libertarian realm in a single bound. We anticipate a transitional stage during which the ground can be cleared and smoothed for the anarchist society with the aid of an anti-bourgeois political power: the dictatorship of the proletariat exercised by the proletarian party in power. In short, it

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"We say that if America has entered the war to make the world safe for democracy, she must first make democracy safe in America. How else is the world to take America seriously, when democracy at home is daily being outraged, free speech suppressed, peaceable assemblies broken up by overbearing and brutal gangsters in uniform; when free press is curtailed and every independent opinion gagged." -Emma G.

is only a difference of "degree," nothing more. Essentially, we are very close to one another. Brothers in arms. Think of it: we will have a common foe to fight. Will it even occur to us to fight one another? And anyway, I have no doubt but that you will quickly be persuaded of the necessity for a provisional socialist proletarian dictatorship. So I really cannot see any reason for warfare between you and us. We will assuredly march hand in hand. And then, even if we do not see eye to eye, you are overstating things a bit to suggest that we socialists will use brute force against anarchists! Life itself and the views of the masses will be enough to resolve the matter and bring us into agreement. No! Can you really, for a single instant, entertain such a nonsense: left-wing socialists in power turning their guns on the anarchists! Come, come, what do you take us for? Anyway, we are socialists, comrade Voline! So we are not your enemies ..."

In December 1919, gravely wounded, I was arrested by the Bolshevik military authorities in the Makhnovist region. Deeming me a militant "of some standing," the authorities notified Trotsky of my arrest by means of a special telegram asking his view of how I should be handled. His answer arrived snappily and tersely and plainly - also by telegram: "Shoot out of hand. - Trotsky."

I was not shot, thanks solely to a set of particularly felicitous and quite fortuitous circumstances.

-Voline

Daniel Guerin's *Anarchism*

1970 --Monthly Review Press
Anarchism in the Russian Revolution

Anarchism had found its second wind in revolutionary syndicalism; the Russian Revolution gave it its third. This statement may at first surprise the reader, accustomed to think of the great revolutionary movement of October 1917 as the work and domain of the Bolsheviks alone. The Russian Revolution was, in fact, a great mass movement, a wave rising from the people which passed over and submerged ideological formations. It belonged to no one, unless to the people. In so far as it was an authentic revolution, taking its impulse from the bottom upward and spontaneously producing the organs of direct democracy, it presented all the characteristics of a social revolution with libertarian tendencies. However, the relative weakness of the Russian anarchists prevented them from exploiting situations which were exceptionally favorable to the triumph of their ideas.

The Revolution was ultimately confiscated and distorted by the mastery, according to some-the cunning, according to others-of the professional revolutionary team grouped around Lenin. But this defeat of both anarchism and the authentic popular revolution was not entirely sterile for the libertarian idea. In the first place, the collective appropriation of the means of production has not again been put in question, and this safeguards the ground upon which, one day perhaps, socialism from below may prevail over state regimentation; moreover, the Russian experience has provided the occasion for some Russian and some non-Russian anarchists to learn the complex lessons of a temporary defeat-lessons of which Lenin himself seemed to have become aware on the eve of his death. In this context they could rethink the whole problem of revolution and anarchism. According to Kropotkin, echoed by Voline, it taught them, should they ever need to know, how not to make a revolution. Far from proving that libertarian socialism is impracticable, the Soviet experience, on the

contrary, broadly confirmed the prophetic correctness of the views of the founders of anarchism and, in particular, their critique of authoritarian socialism.

A LIBERTARIAN REVOLUTION

The point of departure of the Revolution of 1917 was that of 1905, during which a new kind of revolutionary organ had come into being: the soviets. They were born in the factories of St. Petersburg during a spontaneous general strike. In the almost complete absence of a trade-union movement and tradition, the soviets filled a vacuum by coordinating the struggle of the factories on strike. The anarchist Voline was one of the small group which had the idea of setting up the first soviet, in close liaison with the works and at their suggestion. His evidence coincides with that of Trotsky, who became president of the soviet a few months later. In his account of 1905 he wrote, without any pejorative intent-quite the contrary: "The activity of the soviet represented the organization of anarchy. Its existence and its subsequent development marked the consolidation of anarchy."

This experience had made a permanent mark upon workingclass consciousness and, when the second Russian Revolution broke out in February 1917, its leaders did not have to invent anything. The workers took over the factories spontaneously. The soviets revived on their own initiative. Once again, they took the professional revolutionaries by surprise. On Lenin's own admission, the masses of peasants and workers were "a hundred times further to the left" than the Bolsheviks. The prestige of the soviets was such that it was only in their name and at their behest that the October insurrection could be launched.

In spite of their vigor, however, they were lacking in homogeneity, revolutionary experience, and ideological preparation. This made them easy prey to political parties with uncertain revolutionary ideas. Although it was a minority organization, the Bolshevik Party was the only really organized revolutionary force which knew where it was going. It had no rivals on the extreme left in either the political or the trade-union field. It had first-class cadres at its disposal, and set in motion, as Voline admitted, "a feverish, overwhelming, fierce activity."

The party machine, however---of which Stalin was at that time

RUDOLF ROCKER

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an obscure ornament-had always regarded the soviets with suspicion as embarrassing competitors. Immediately after the seizure of power, the spontaneous and irresistible tendency toward the socialization of production was, at first, channeled through workers' control. A decree of November 14, 1917, legalized the participation of workers in the management of enterprises and the fixing of prices; it abolished trade secrets, and compelled the employers to publish their correspondence and their accounts. According to Victor Serge, "the leaders of the Revolution did not intend to go beyond this." In April 1918 they "still intended . . . to set tip mixed companies with shares, in which the Soviet State and Russian and foreign capital would all participate." "The initiative for measures of expropriation came from the masses and not from authority."

As early as October 20, 1917, at the first Congress of Factory Councils, a motion inspired by anarchism was presented. It proposed "control over production, and that control commissions should not be simply investigative bodies, but . . . from this moment on cells of the future preparing to transfer production to the hands of the workers." "In the very early days of the October Revolution," Anna Pankratova (who later became a Stalinist) reported, "anarchist tendencies were the more easily and successfully manifested, because the capitalists put up the liveliest resistance to the enforcement of the decree on workers' control and actually refused workers' participation in production."

Workers' control in effect soon showed itself to be a half measure, halting and inefficient. The employers sabotaged it, concealed their stocks, removed tools, challenged or locked out the workers; sometimes they used the factory committees as simple agents or aides to management; they even thought it profitable to try to have their firms nationalized. The workers responded to these maneuvers by seizing the factories and running them for their own benefit. "We ourselves will not send the owners away," the workers said in their resolutions, "but we will take charge of production if they will not insure that the factories function." Anna Pankratova adds that, in this first period of "chaotic" and "primitive" socialization, the factory councils "frequently took over the management of factories whose owners had been dismissed or had fled."

Workers' control soon had to give place to socialization. Lenin literally did violence to his more timorous lieutenants by throwing them into the "crucible of living popular creativity," by obliging them to speak in authentic libertarian language. The basis of revolutionary reconstruction was to be workers' self-management. It alone could arouse in the masses such revolutionary enthusiasm that the impossible would become possible. When the last manual worker, any unemployed person, any cook, could see the factories, the land the administration in the hands of associations of workers, of employees, of officials, of peasants; rationing in the hands of democratic committees, etc; all created spontaneously by the people—"when the poor see and feel that, there will be no force able to defeat the social revolution." The future secured to be opening up for a republic of the type of the Commune of 1871, a republic of soviets.

According to Voline's account, "in order to catch the imagination of the masses, gain their confidence and their sympathy, the Bolshevik Party announced . . . slogans which had up till then been characteristic . . . of anarchism." All power to the soviets was a slogan which the masses intuitively understood in the libertarian sense. Peter Archinoff reported that "the workers interpreted the idea of soviet power as that of their own right to dispose of themselves socially and economically." At the Third Congress of Soviets, at the beginning of 1918, Lenin declared: "Anarchist ideas have now taken on living form." Soon after, at the Seventh Party Congress, March 6-8, he proposed for adoption theses which dealt among other things with the socialization of production administered by workers, organizations (trade unions, factory committees,

etc.); the abolition of officials in charge of manual trades, of the police and the army; the equality of salaries and remuneration; the participation of all members of the soviets in management and administration of the State; the complete elimination by stages of the said State and of the use of money. At the Trade-Union Congress (spring 1918), Lenin described the factories as "self-governing communes of producers and consumers." The anarcho-syndicalist Maximoff goes so far as to maintain that "the Bolsheviks had not only abandoned the theory of the gradual withering away of the State, but Marxist ideology in general. They had become some kind of anarchists."

AN AUTHORITARIAN REVOLUTION

This audacious alignment with the instinct of the masses and their revolutionary temper may have succeeded in giving the Bolsheviks command over the revolution, but had nothing to do with their traditional ideology or their real intentions. They had been authoritarians for a long time, and were imbued with ideas of the State, of dictatorship, of centralization, of a ruling party, of management of the economy from above, of all things which were in flagrant contradiction with a really libertarian conception of soviet democracy.

State and Revolution was written on the eve of the October insurrection and mirrors the ambivalence of Lenin's thoughts. Some pages might have been written by a libertarian and, as we have seen above,* some credit at least is given to the anarchists. However, this call for a revolution from below runs parallel to a statement of the case for a revolution from above. Concepts of a hierarchical, centralized state system are not half concealed afterthoughts but, on the contrary, are frankly expressed: the State will survive the conquest of power by the proletariat and will wither away only after a transitional period. How long is this purgatory to last? This is not concealed—we are told rather with relief than with regret that the process will be "slow," and "of long duration." Under the guise of soviet power, the revolution will bring forth the "proletarian State," or "dictatorship of the proletariat"; the writer even lets slip the expression "bourgeois State without the bourgeoisie," just when he is revealing his inmost thoughts. This omnivorous State surely intends to take everything over.

Lenin took a lesson from contemporary German state capitalism, the Kriegswirtschaft (war economy). Another of his models was the organization of modern large-scale industry by capitalism, with its "Iron discipline." He was particularly entranced by a state monopoly such as the posts and telegraphs and exclaimed: "What an admirably perfected mechanism! The whole of economic life organized like the postal services, that is the State, that is the economic base which we need." To seek to do without "authority" and "subordination" is an "anarchist

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dream," he concluded. At one time he had waxed enthusiastic over the idea of entrusting production and exchange to workers' associations and to self-management. But that was a misdeal. Now he did not hide his magic prescription: all citizens becoming "employees and workers of one universal single state trust," the whole of society converted into "one great office and one great factory." There would be soviets, to be sure, but under the control of the workers' party a party whose historic task it is to "direct" the proletariat. The most clear-minded Russian anarchists were not misled by this view. At the peak of Lenin's libertarian period they were already warning the workers to be on their guard: in their journal, *Golos Truda* (The Voice of Labor), in the last months of 1917 and early in 1918 Voline wrote the following prophetic warning:

"Once they have consolidated and legalized their power, the Bolsheviks—who are socialists, politicians, and believers in the State, that is to say, centralist and authoritarian men of action—will begin to arrange the life of the country and the people by governmental and dictatorial means imposed from the centers . . . Your soviets . . . will gradually become simply executive organs of the will of the central government. . . . An authoritarian political state apparatus will be set up and, acting from above, it will seek to crush everything with its iron fist . . . Woe betide anyone who is not in agreement with the central authority." "All power to the soviets will become in effect the authority of the party leaders."

It was Voline's view that it was the increasingly anarchist tendencies of the masses which obliged Lenin to turn away from his original path for a time. He would allow the State, authority, the dictatorship, to remain only for an hour, for a short moment. And then would come "anarchism." "But, good God, do you not foresee . . . what citizen Lenin will say when real power has been consolidated and it has become possible not to listen any more to the voice of the masses?" Then he will come back to the beaten path. He will create "a Marxist State," of the most complete type.

It would, of course, be risky to maintain that Lenin and his team consciously set a trap for the masses. There was more doctrinal dualism in them than deliberate duplicity. The contradiction between the two poles of their thought was so obvious, so flagrant, that it was to be foreseen that it would soon impinge upon events. Either the anarchist trend and the pressure of the

masses would oblige the Bolsheviks to forget the authoritarian aspect of their concepts, or, on the contrary, the consolidation of their power, coinciding with the exhaustion of the people's revolutionary upsurge, would lead them to put aside their transitory anarchist thoughts.

A new factor then made its appearance, disturbing the balance of the issues in question: the terrible circumstances of the civil war and the foreign intervention, the disorganization of transport, the shortage of technicians. These things drove the Bolshevik leaders to emergency measures, to dictatorship, to centralization, and to recourse to the "Iron fist." The anarchists, however, denied that these were the result simply of objective causes external to the Revolution. In their opinion they were due in part to the internal logic of the authoritarian ideas of Bolshevism, to the weakness of an overcentralized and excessively bureaucratic authority. According to Voline, it was, among other things, the incompetence of the State, and its desire to direct and control everything, that made it incapable of reorganizing the economic life of the country and led to a real "breakdown"; that is, to the paralysis of industry, the ruin of agriculture, and the destruction of all connections between the various branches of the economy.

As an example, Voline told the story of the former Nobel oil refinery at Petrograd. It had been abandoned by its owners and its 4,000 workers decided to operate it collectively. They addressed themselves to the Bolshevik government in vain. Then they tried to make the plant work on their own initiative. They divided themselves into mobile groups and tried to find fuel, raw materials, outlets, and means of transport. With regard to the latter they had actually begun discussions with their comrades among the railwaymen. The government became angry, feeling that its responsibility to the country prevented it from allowing each factory to act independently. The workers' council persisted and called a general assembly of the workers. The People's Commissar of Labor took the trouble to give a personal warning to the workers against a "serious act of insubordination." He castigated their attitude as "anarchistic and egotistical." He threatened them with dismissal without compensation. The workers retorted that they were not asking for any privileges: the government should let the workers and peasants all over the country act in the same way. All in vain, the government stuck to its point of view and the factory was closed.

One Communist confirms Voline's analysis: Alexandra Kollontay. In 1921 she complained that numerous examples of workers' initiative had come to grief amid endless paperwork and useless administrative discussions: "How much bitterness there is among the workers . . . when they see what they could have achieved if they had been given the right and the freedom to act. . . . Initiative becomes weak and the desire for action dies down."

In fact the power of the soviets only lasted a few months, from October 1917 to the spring of 1918. The factory councils were very soon deprived of their power, on the pretext that self-management did not take account of the "rational" needs of the economy, that it involved an egoism of enterprises competing one with the other, grasping for scarce resources, wanting to survive at any price even if other factories were more important "for the State" and better equipped. In brief, according to Anna Pankratova, the situation was moving toward a fragmentation of the economy into "autonomous producers' federations of the kind dreamed of by the anarchists." No doubt the budding workers' self-management was not above reproach. It had tried, painfully and tentatively, to create new forms of production which had no precedent in world history. It had certainly made mistakes and taken wrong turns. That was the price of apprenticeship. As Alexandra Kollontay maintained, communism could not be "born except by a process of practical research, with mistakes perhaps, but starting from the creative forces of the working class itself."

The leaders of the Party did not hold this view. They were only too pleased to take back from the factory committees the power which

they had not in their heart of hearts been happy to hand over. As early as 1918, Lenin stated his preference for the "single will" in the management of enterprises. The workers must obey 11 unconditionally" the single will of the directors of the work process. All the Bolshevik leaders, Kollontay tells us, were "skeptical with regard to the creative abilities of workers' collectives." Moreover, the administration was invaded by large numbers of petty bourgeois, left over from old Russian capitalism, who had adapted themselves all too quickly to institutions of the soviet type, and had got themselves into responsible positions in the various commissariats, insisting that economic management should be entrusted to them and not to workers' organizations.

The state bureaucracy played an increasing role in the economy. From December 5, 1917, on, industry was put under a Supreme Economic Council, responsible for the authoritarian coordination of the activity of all organs of production. From May 26 to June 4, 1918, the Congress of Economic Councils met and decided that the directorate of each enterprise should be composed of members two-thirds of whom would be nominated by the regional councils or the Supreme Economic Council and only one-third elected by workers on the spot. A decree of May 28, 1918, extended collectivization to industry as a whole but, by the same token, transformed the spontaneous socializations of the first months of the revolution into nationalizations. The Supreme Economic Council was made responsible for the administration of the nationalized industries. The directors and technical staff were to remain at their posts as appointees of the State. At the Second Congress of the Supreme Economic Council at the end of 1918, the factory councils were roundly trounced by the committee reporter for trying to direct the factories in the place of the board of directors.

For the sake of appearances, elections to factory committees continued to take place, but a member of the Communist cell read out a list of candidates drawn up in advance and voting was by show of hands in the presence of the armed "Communist guards" of the enterprise. Anyone who declared his opposition to the proposed candidates became subject to economic sanctions (wage cuts, etc.). As Peter Archinoff reported, there remained a single omnipresent master—the State. Relations between the workers and this new master became similar to those which had previously existed between labor and capital.

The functions of the soviets had become purely nominal. They were transformed into institutions of government power. "You must become basic cells of the State," Lenin told the Congress of Factory Councils on June 27, 1918. As Voline expressed it, they were reduced to the role of "purely administrative and executive organs responsible for small, unimportant local matters and entirely subject to 'directives' from the central authorities: government and the leading organs of the Party." They no longer had "even the shadow of power." At the Third Trades-Union Congress (April 1920), the committee reporter, Lozovsky, admitted: "We have abandoned the old methods of workers' control and we have preserved only the principle of state control." From now on this "control" was to be exercised by an organ of the State: the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate.

The industrial federations which were centralist in structure had, in the first place, helped the Bolsheviks to absorb and subjugate the factory councils which were federalist and libertarian in their nature. From April 1, 1918, the fusion between the two types of organization was an accomplished fact. From then on the trade unions played a disciplinary role under the supervision of the Party. The union of workers in the heavy metal industries of Petrograd forbade "disruptive initiatives" from the factory councils and objected to their "most dangerous" tendency to put this or that enterprise into the hands of the workers. This was said to be the worst way of imitating production cooperatives, "the idea of which had long since been bankrupt" and which would "not fail to transform themselves into capitalist undertakings." "Any enterprise abandoned or sabotaged by an industrialist, the product of which was necessary to the national economy, was to be placed under the control of the State." It was not permissible that the workers should

take over such enterprises without the approval of the trade-union organization.

After this preliminary take-over operation the trade unions were, in their turn, tamed, deprived of any autonomy, purged; their congresses were postponed, their members arrested, their organizations disbanded or merged into larger units. At the end of this process any anarcho-syndicalist tendency had been wiped out, and the trade-union movement was completely subordinated to the State and the single party.

The same thing happened with regard to consumers' cooperatives. In the early stages of the Revolution they had arisen everywhere, increased in numbers, and federated with each other. Their offense, however, was that they were outside the control of the Party and a certain number of social democrats (Mensheviks) had infiltrated them. First, local shops were deprived of their supplies and means of transport on the pretext of "private trade" and "speculation," or even without any pretext at all. Then, all free cooperatives were closed at one stroke and state cooperatives set up bureaucratically in their place. The decree of March 20, 1919, absorbed the consumer cooperatives into the Commissariat of Food Supplies and the industrial producer cooperatives into the Supreme Economic Council. Many members of cooperatives were thrown into prison.

The working class did not react either quickly or vigorously enough. It was dispersed, isolated in an immense, backward, and for the most part rural country exhausted by privation and revolutionary struggle, and, still worse, demoralized. Finally, its best members had left for the fronts of the civil war or had been absorbed into the party and government apparatus. Nevertheless, quite a number of workers felt themselves more or less done out of the fruits of their revolutionary victories, deprived of their rights, subjected to tutelage, humiliated by the arrogance and arbitrary power of the new masters; and these became aware of the real nature of the supposed "proletarian State." Thus, during the summer of 1918, dissatisfied workers in the Moscow and Petrograd factories elected delegates from among their number, trying in this way to oppose their authentic "delegate councils" to the soviets of enterprises already captured by authority. Kollontay bears witness that the worker felt sore and understood that he had been pushed aside. He could compare the life style of the soviet functionaries with the way in which he lived—he upon whom the "dictatorship of the proletariat" was based, at least in theory.

By the time the workers really saw the light it was too late. Power had had the time to organize itself solidly and had at its disposal repressive forces fully able to break any attempted autonomous action on the part of the masses. According to Voline, a bitter but unequal struggle lasted some three years, and was entirely unknown outside Russia. In this a working-class vanguard opposed a state apparatus determined to deny the division which had developed between itself and the masses. From 1919 to 1921, strikes increased in the large cities, in Petrograd especially, and even in Moscow. They were severely repressed, as we shall see further on,

Within the directing Party itself a "Workers' Opposition" arose which demanded a return to the democracy of the soviets and self-management. At the Tenth Party Congress in March 1921, one of its spokesmen, Alexandra Kollontay, distributed a pamphlet asking for freedom of initiative and organization for the trade unions and for a "congress of producers" to elect a central administrative organ for the national economy. The brochure was confiscated and banned. Lenin persuaded almost the whole congress to vote for a resolution identifying the theses of the Workers' Opposition with

"petty-bourgeois and anarchist deviations": the "syndicalism," the "semi-anarchism" of the oppositionists was in his eyes a "direct danger" to the monopoly of power exercised by the Party in the name of the proletariat. From then on all opposition within the Party was forbidden and the way was open to "totalitarianism," as was admitted by Trotsky years later.

The struggle continued within the central leadership of the trade unions. Tomsy and Riazanov were excluded from the Presidium and sent into exile, because they had stood for trade unions independent of the Party. The leader of the workers' opposition, Shlyapnikov, met the same fate, and was soon followed by the prime mover of another opposition group: G. I. Miasnikov, a genuine worker who had put the Grand Duke Michael to death in 1917. He had been a party member for fifteen years and, before the revolution, spent more than seven years in prison and seventy-five days on a hunger strike. In November 1921, he dared to state in a pamphlet that the workers had lost confidence in the Communists, because the Party no longer had a common language with the rank and file and was now using against the working class the repressive measures brought in against the bourgeoisie between 1918 and 1920.

THE PART PLAYED BY THE ANARCHISTS

What part did the Russian anarchists play in this drama in which a libertarian-style revolution was transmuted into its opposite? Russia had no libertarian traditions and it was in foreign lands that Bakunin and Kropotkin became anarchists. Neither played a militant anarchist role inside Russia at any time. Up to the time of the 1917 Revolution, only a few copies of short extracts from their writings had appeared in Russia, clandestinely and with great difficulty. There was nothing anarchist in the social, socialist, and revolutionary education of the Russians. On the contrary, as Voline told us, "advanced Russian youth were reading literature which always presented socialism in a statist form." People's minds were soaked in ideas of government, having been contaminated by German social democracy. The anarchists "were a tiny handful of men without influence," at the most a few thousand. Voline reported that their movement was "still far too small to have any immediate, concrete effect on events." Moreover, most of them were individualist intellectuals not much involved in the working-class movement. Voline was an exception, as was Nestor Makhno, who could move the hearts of the masses in his native Ukraine. In Makhno's memoirs he passed the severe judgment that "Russian anarchism lagged behind events or even functioned completely outside them."

However, this judgment seems to be less than fair. The anarchists played a far from negligible part in events between the February and October revolutions. Trotsky admitted this more than once in his *History of the Russian Revolution*. "Brave" and "active," though few in numbers, they were a principled opposition in the Constituent Assembly at a time when the Bolsheviks had not yet turned anti-parliamentary. They put out the call "all power to the soviets" long before Lenin's party did so. They inspired the movement for the spontaneous socialization of housing, often against the will of the Bolsheviks. Anarcho-syndicalist activists played a part in inducing workers to take over the factories, even before October.

During the revolutionary days that brought Kerensky's bourgeois republic to an end, the anarchists were in the forefront of the military struggle, especially in the Dvinsk regiment commanded by old libertarians like Grachoff and Fedotoff. This force dislodged the counter-revolutionary "cadets." Aided by his detachment, the anarchist Gelezniakov disbanded the Constituent Assembly: the Bolsheviks only ratified the accomplished fact. Many partisan detachments were formed or led

by anarchists (Mokroussoff, Cherniak, and others), and fought unrelentingly against the White armies between 1918 and 1920.

Scarcely a major city was without an anarchist or anarcho-syndicalist group, spreading a relatively large amount of printed matter—papers, periodicals, leaflets, pamphlets, and books. There were two weeklies in Petrograd and a daily in Moscow, each appearing in 25,000 copies. Anarchist sympathizers increased as the Revolution deepened and then moved away from the masses. The French captain Jacques Sadoul, on a mission in Russia, wrote in a report dated April 6, 1918: "The anarchist party is the most active, the most militant of the opposition groups and probably the most popular . . . The Bolsheviks are anxious." At the end of 1918, according to Voline, "this influence became so great that the Bolsheviks, who could not accept criticism, still less opposition, became seriously disturbed." Voline reports that for the Bolshevik authorities "it was equivalent . . . to suicide to tolerate anarchist propaganda. They did their best first to prevent, and then to forbid, any manifestation of libertarian ideas and finally suppressed them by brute force."

The Bolshevik government "began by forcibly closing the offices of libertarian organizations, and forbidding the anarchists from taking part in any propaganda or activity." In Moscow on the night of April 12, 1918, detachments of Red Guards, armed to the teeth, took over by surprise twenty-five houses occupied by the anarchists. The latter, thinking that they were being attacked by White Guards, replied with gunfire. According to Voline, the authorities soon went on to "more violent measures: imprisonment, outlawing, and execution." "For four years this conflict was to keep the Bolshevik authorities on their toes . . . until the libertarian trend was finally crushed by military measures (at the end of 1921-)." The liquidation of the anarchists was all the easier since they had divided into two factions, one of which refused to be tamed while the other allowed itself to be domesticated. The latter regarded "historical necessity" as justification for making a gesture of loyalty to the regime and, at last temporarily, approving its dictatorial actions. They considered a victorious end to the civil war and the crushing of the counter-revolution to be the first necessities.

The more intransigent anarchists regarded this as a short-sighted tactic. For the counter-revolutionary movements were being fed by the bureaucratic impotence of the government apparatus and the disillusionment and discontent of the people. Moreover, the authorities ended up by making no distinction between the active wing of the libertarian revolution which was disputing its methods of control, and the criminal activities of its right-wing adversaries. To accept dictatorship and terror was a suicidal policy for the anarchists who were themselves to become its victims. Finally, the conversion of the so-called soviet anarchists made the crushing of those other, irreconcilable, ones easier, for they were treated as "false" anarchists, irresponsible and unrealistic dreamers, stupid muddlers, madmen, sowers of division, and, finally, counterrevolutionary bandits.

Victor Serge was the most brilliant, and therefore considered the most authoritative, of the converted anarchists. He worked for the regime and published a pamphlet in French which attempted to defend it against anarchist criticism. The book he wrote later, *L'An I de la Revolution Russe*, is largely a justification of the liquidation of the soviets by Bolshevism. The Party—or rather its elite leadership—is presented as the brains of the working class. It is up to the duly selected leader of the vanguard to discover what the proletariat can and must do. Without them, the masses organized in soviets would be no more than "a sprinkling of men with confused aspirations shot through with gleams of intelligence."

Victor Serge was certainly too clear-minded to have any illusions about the real nature of the central Soviet power. But this power was still haloed with the prestige of the first victorious proletarian revolution; it was loathed by world counter-revolution; and that was one of the reasons—the most honorable—why Serge and many other revolutionaries saw fit to put a padlock on their tongues. In the summer of 1921 the

anarchist Gaston Leval came to Moscow in the Spanish delegation to the Third Congress of the Communist International. In private, Serge confided to him that "the Communist Party no longer practices the dictatorship of the proletariat but dictatorship over the proletariat." Returning to France, Leval published articles in *Le Libertaire*, using well-documented facts, and placing side by side what Victor Serge had told him confidentially and his public statements, which he described as "conscious lies." In *Living My Life*, the great American anarchist Emma Goldman was no kinder to Victor Serge, whom she had seen in action in Moscow.

THE MAKHNOVTCHINA

It had been relatively easy to liquidate the small, weak nuclei of anarchists in the cities, but things were different in the Ukraine, where the peasant Nestor Makhno had built up a strong rural anarchist organization, both economic and military. Makhno was born of poor Ukrainian peasants and was twenty years old in 1919. As a child, he had seen the 1905 Revolution and later became an anarchist. The Czarist regime sentenced him to death, commuted to eight years' imprisonment, which was spent, more often than not in irons, in Boutirki prison, the only school he was ever to attend. He filled at least some of the gaps in his education with the help of a fellow-prisoner, Peter Archinoff.

Immediately after the October Revolution, Makhno took the initiative in organizing masses of peasants into an autonomous region, a roughly circular area 480 by 400 miles, with seven million inhabitants. Its southern end reached the Sea of Azov at the port of Berdiansk, and it was centered in Gulyai-Polye, a large town of 20,000 to 30,000 people. This was a traditionally rebellious region which had seen violent disturbances in 1905.

The story began when the German and Austrian armies of occupation imposed a right-wing regime which hastened to return to their former owners the lands which had been seized by revolutionary peasants. The land workers put up an armed defense of their new conquests. They resisted reaction but also the untimely intrusion of Bolshevik commissars, and their excessive levies. This vast *facquerie** was inspired by a "lover of justice," a sort of anarchist Robin Hood called "Father" Makhno by the peasants. His first feat of arms was the capture of Gulyai-Polye in mid-September 1918. The armistice of November 11, however, led to the withdrawal of the Austro-German occupation forces, and gave Makhno a unique opportunity to build up reserves of arms and supplies.

For the first time in history, the principles of libertarian communism were applied in the liberated Ukraine, and self-management was put into force as far as possible in the circumstances of the civil war. Peasants united in "communes" or "free-work soviets," and communally tilled the land for which they had fought with the former owners. These groups respected the principles of equality and fraternity. Each man, woman, or child had to work in proportion to his or her strength, and comrades elected to temporary managerial functions subsequently returned to their regular work alongside the other members of the communes.

Each soviet was simply the executive of the will of the peasants in the locality from which it had been elected. Production units were federated into districts, and districts into regions. The soviets were integrated into a general economic system based on social equality; they were to be independent of any political party. No politician was to dictate his will to them under cover of soviet power. Members had to be authentic workers at the service of the laboring masses.

When the Maklinovist partisans moved into an area they put up posters reading -. "The freedom of the workers and peasants is their own, and not subject to any restriction. It is up to the workers and peasants themselves to act, to organize themselves, to agree among themselves in all aspects of their lives, as they themselves see fit and desire The Makhnovists can do no more than give aid and counsel In no circumstances can they, nor do they wish to, govern."

When, in 1920, Makhno's men were brought to negotiate with the

Bolsheviks, they did so as their equals, and concluded an ephemeral agreement with them, to which they insisted that the following appendix be added: "In the area where the Makhnovist army is operating the worker and peasant population shall create its own free institutions for economic and political self-administration; these institutions shall be autonomous and linked federally by agreements with the governing organs of the Soviet Republics." The Bolshevik negotiators were staggered and separated the appendix from the agreement in order to refer it to Moscow where of course, it was, considered "absolutely inadmissible."

One of the relative weaknesses of the Makhnovist movement was its lack of libertarian intellectuals, but it did receive some intermittent aid from outside. This came first from Kharkov and Kursk where the anarchists, inspired by Voline, had in 1918 formed a union called Nabat (the tocsin). In 1919 they held a congress at which they declared themselves "categorically and definitely opposed to any form of participation in the soviets, which have become purely political bodies, organized on an authoritarian, centralized, statist basis." The Bolshevik government regarded this statement as a declaration of war and the Nabat was forced to give up all its activities. Later, in July, Voline got through to Makhno's headquarters and joined with Peter Arebinoff to take charge of the cultural and educational side of the movement. He presided at the congress held in October at Alexandrovsk, where the "General Theses" setting out the doctrine of the "free soviets" were adopted.

Peasant and partisan delegates took part in these congresses. In fact, the civil organization was an extension of a peasant army of insurrection, practicing guerrilla tactics. This army was remarkably mobile, covering as much as 160 miles in a day, thanks not only to its cavalry but also to its infantry, which traveled in light horse-drawn carts with springs. This army was organized on a specifically libertarian, voluntary basis. The elective principle was applied at all levels and discipline freely agreed to: the rules of the latter were drawn up by commissions of partisans, then validated by general assemblies, and were strictly observed by all.

Makhno's franc-tireurs gave the White armies of intervention plenty of trouble. The units of Bolshevik Red Guards, for their part, were not very effective. They fought only along the railways and never went far from their armored trains, to which they withdrew at the first reverse, sometimes without taking on board all their own combatants. This did not give much confidence to the peasants who were short of arms and isolated in their villages and so would have been at the mercy of the counter-revolutionaries. Arebinoff, the historian of the Makhnovtchina, wrote that "the honor of destroying Denikin's counter-revolution in the autumn of 1919 is principally due to the anarchist insurgents."

But after the units of Red Guards had been absorbed into the Red Army, Makhno persisted in refusing to place his army under the supreme command of the Red Army chief, Trotsky. That great revolutionary therefore believed it necessary to turn upon the insurrectionary movement. On June 4, 1919, he drafted an order banning the forthcoming Maklinovist congress, accusing them of standing out against Soviet power in the Ukraine. He characterized participation in the congress as an act of "high treason" and called for the arrest of the delegates. He refused to give arms to Makhno's partisans, failing in his duty of assisting them, and subsequently accused them of "betrayal" and of allowing themselves to be beaten by the White troops. The same procedure was followed eighteen years later by the Spanish Stalinists against the anarchist brigades.

The two armies, however, came to an agreement again, on two occasions, when the extreme danger caused by the intervention

required them to act together. This occurred first in March 1919, against Denikin, the second during the summer and autumn of 1920, before the menace of the White forces of Wrangel which were finally destroyed by Makhno. But as soon as the supreme danger was past the Red Army returned to military operations against the partisans of Makhno, who returned blow for blow.

At the end of November 1920 those in power went so far as to prepare an ambush. The Bolsheviks invited the officers of the Crimean Makhnovist army to take part in a military council. There they were immediately arrested by the Cheka, the political police, and shot while their partisans were disarmed. At the same time a regular offensive was launched against Gulyal-Polye. The increasingly unequal struggle between libertarians and authoritarians continued for another nine months. In the end, however, overcome by more numerous and better equipped forces, Makhno had to give up the struggle. He managed to take refuge in Rumania in August 1921, and later reached Paris, where he died much later of disease and poverty. This was the end of the epic story of the Makhnovtchina. According to Peter Archinoff, it was the prototype of an independent movement of the working masses and hence a source of future inspiration for the workers of the world.

KRONSTADT

In February-March 1921, the Petrograd workers and the sailors of the Kronstadt fortress were driven to revolt, the aspirations which inspired them being very similar to those of the Makhnovist revolutionary peasants.

The material conditions of urban workers had become intolerable through lack of foodstuffs, fuel, and transport, and any expression of discontent was being crushed by a more and more dictatorial and totalitarian regime. At the end of February strikes broke out in Petrograd, Moscow, and several other large industrial centers. The workers demanded bread and liberty; they marched from one factory to another, closing them down, attracting new contingents of workers into their demonstrations. The authorities replied with gunfire, and the Petrograd workers in turn by a protest meeting attended by 10,000 workers. Kronstadt was an island naval base forty-eight miles from Petrograd in the Gulf of Finland which was frozen during the winter. It was populated by sailors and several thousand workers employed in the naval arsenals. The Kronstadt sailors had been in the vanguard of the revolutionary events of 1905 and 1917. As Trotsky put it, they had been the "pride and glory of the Russian Revolution." The civilian inhabitants of Kronstadt had formed a free commune, relatively independent of the authorities. In the center of the fortress an enormous public square served as a popular forum holding as many as 30,000 persons.

In 1921 the sailors certainly did not have the same revolutionary makeup and the same personnel as in 1917; they had been drawn from the peasantry far more than their predecessors; but the militant spirit had remained and as a result of their earlier performance they retained the right to take an active part in workers' meetings in Petrograd. When the workers of the former capital went on strike they sent emissaries who were driven back by the forces of order. During two mass meetings held in the main square they took up as their own the demands of the Strikers.

Sixteen thousand sailors, workers, and soldiers attended the second meeting held on March 1, as did the head of state, Kalinin, president of the central executive. In spite of his presence they passed a resolution demanding that the workers, Red soldiers, and sailors of Petrograd, Kronstadt, and the Petrograd province be called together during the next ten days in a conference independent of the political parties. They also called for the abolition of "political officers," asked that no political party should have privileges, and that the Communist shock detachments in the army and "Communist guards" in the factories should be dis-

banded.

It was indeed the monopoly of power of the governing party which they were attacking. The Kronstadt rebels dared to call this monopoly an "usurpation." Let the angry sailors speak for themselves, as we skim through the pages of the official journal of this new commune, the *Izvestia* of Kronstadt. According to them, once it had seized power the Communist Party had only one concern: to keep it by fair means or foul. It had lost contact with the masses, and proved its inability to get the country out of a state of general collapse. It had become bureaucratic and lost the confidence of the workers. The soviets, having lost their real power, had been meddled with, taken over, and manipulated, the trade unions were being made instruments of the State. An omnipotent police apparatus weighed on the people, enforcing its laws by gunfire and the use of terror. Economic life had become not the promised socialism, based on free labor, but a harsh state capitalism. The workers were simply wage earners under this national trust, exploited just as before. The irreverent men of Kronstadt went so far as to express doubt about the infallibility of the supreme leaders of the revolution. They mocked Trotsky, and even Lenin, irreverently. Their immediate demands were the restoration of all freedoms and free elections to all the organs of soviet democracy, but beyond this they were looking to a more distant objective with a clearly anarchist content: a "third revolution."

The rebels did, however, intend to keep within the framework of the Revolution and undertook to watch over the achievements of the social revolution. They proclaimed that they had nothing in common with those who would have wished to "return to the knout of Czarism," and though they did not conceal their intention of depriving the "Communists" of power, this was not to be for the purpose of "returning the workers and peasants to slavery." Moreover, they did not cut off all possibility of cooperation with the regime, still hoping "to be able to find a common language." Finally, the freedom of expression they were demanding was not to be for just anybody, but only for sincere believers in the Revolution: anarchists and "left socialists" (a formula which would exclude social democrats or Mensheviks).

The audacity of Kronstadt was much more than a Lenin or a Trotsky could endure. The Bolshevik leaders had once and for all identified the Revolution with the Communist Party, and anything which went against this myth must, in their eyes, appear as "counter-revolutionary." They saw the whole of Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy in danger. Kronstadt frightened them the more, since they were governing in the name of the proletariat and, suddenly, their authority was being disputed by a movement which they knew to be authentically proletarian. Lenin, moreover, held the rather simplistic idea that a Czarist restoration was the only alternative to the dictatorship of his own party. The statesmen of the Kremlin in 1921 argued in the same way as those, much later, in the autumn of 1956: Kronstadt was the forerunner of Budapest.

Trotsky, the man with the "iron fist," undertook to be personally responsible for the repression. "If you persist, you will be shot down from cover like partridges," he announced to the "mutineers." The sailors were treated as "White Guardists," accomplices of the interventionist Western powers, and of the "Paris Bourse." They were to be reduced to submission by force of arms. It was in vain that the anarchists Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, who had found asylum in the fatherland of the workers after being deported from the United States, sent a pathetic letter to Zinoviev, insisting that the use of force would do "incalculable damage to the social revolution" and adjuring the "Bolshevik comrades" to settle the conflict through fraternal negotiation. The Petrograd workers could not come to the aid of Kronstadt because they were already terrorized, and subject to martial law.

An expeditionary force was set up composed of carefully hand-picked troops, for many Red soldiers were unwilling to fire on their

class brothers. This force was put under the command of a former Czarist officer, the future Marshall Tukachevsky. The bombardment of the fortress began on March 7. Under the heading "Let the world know!" the besieged inhabitants launched a last appeal: "May the blood of the innocent be on the head of the Communists, mad, drunk and enraged with power. Long live the power of the soviets!" The attacking force moved across the frozen Gulf of Finland on March 18 and quelled the "rebellion" in an orgy of killing.

The anarchists had played no part in this affair. However, the revolutionary committee of Kronstadt had invited two libertarians to join it: Yarcbouk (the founder of the Kronstadt soviet of 1917) and Voline; in vain, for they were at the time imprisoned by the Bolsheviks. Ida Mett, historian of the Kronstadt revolt (in *La Commune de Cronstadt*), commented that "the anarchist influence was brought to bear only to the extent to which anarchism itself propagated the idea of workers' democracy." The anarchists did not play any direct part in events, but they associated themselves with them. Voline later wrote: "Kronstadt was the first entirely independent attempt of the people to free themselves of all control and carry out the social revolution: this attempt was made directly, . . . by the working masses themselves, without 'political shepherds,' without 'leaders,' or 'tutors.' Alexander Berkman added: "Kronstadt blew sky high the myth of the proletarian State; it proved that the dictatorship of the Communist Party and the Revolution were really incompatible."

ANARCHISM LIVING AND DEAD

Although the anarchists played no direct part in the Kronstadt rising, the regime took advantage of crushing it to make an end of an ideology which continued to frighten them. A few weeks earlier, on February 8, the aged Kropotkin had died on Russian soil, and his remains had been given an imposing funeral, which was followed by an immense convoy of about 100,000 people. Over the heads of the crowd, among the red flags, one could see the black banners of the anarchist groups inscribed in letters of fire: "Where there is authority there is no freedom." According to Kropotkin's biographers, this was "the last great demonstration against Bolshevik tyranny, and many took part more to demand freedom than to praise the great anarchist."

Hundreds of anarchists were arrested after Kronstadt, and only a few months later, the libertarian Fanny Baron and eight of her comrades were shot in the cellars of the Cheka prison in Moscow. Militant anarchism had received a fatal blow. But outside Russia, the anarchists who had lived through the Russian Revolution undertook an enormous labor of criticism and doctrinal revision which reinvigorated libertarian thought and made it more concrete. As early as September 1920, the congress of the Confederation of Anarchist Organizations of the Ukraine, Nabat, had categorically rejected the expression "dictatorship of the proletariat," seeing that it led inevitably to dictatorship over the masses by that fraction of the proletariat entrenched in the Party, by officials, and a handful of leaders. just before he died Kropotkin had issued a "Message to the Workers of the West" in which he sorrowfully denounced the rise of a "formidable bureaucracy": "It seems to me that this attempt to build a communist republic on the basis of a strongly centralized state, under the iron law of the dictatorship of one party, has ended in a terrible fiasco. Russia teaches us how not to impose communism."

A pathetic appeal from the Russian anarcho-sindicalists to the world proletariat was published in the January 7-14, 1921, issue of the French journal *Le Libertaire*: "Comrades, put an end to the domination of your bourgeoisie just as we have done here. But do not repeat our errors; do not let state communism establish itself in your countries!" In 1920 the German anarchist, Rudolf Rocker, who later lived and died in the United States,

wrote *Die Bankrotte des Russischen Staatskommunismus* (The Bankruptcy of State Communism), which appeared in 1921. This was the first analysis to be made of the degeneration of the Russian Revolution. In his view the famous "dictatorship of the proletariat" was not the expression of the will of a single class, but the dictatorship of a party pretending to speak in the name of a class and kept in power by force of bayonets. "Under the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia a new class has developed, the 'commissarocracy; which oppresses the broad masses just as much as the old regime used to do." By systematically subordinating all the factors in social life to an all-powerful government endowed with every prerogative, "one could not fail to end up with the hierarchy of officials which proved fatal to the development of the Russian Revolution." "Not only did the Bolsheviks borrow the state apparatus from the previous society, but they have given it an all-embracing power which no other government arrogates to itself."

In June 1922 the group of Russian anarchists exiled in Germany published a revealing little book under the names of A. Corielik, A. Komoff, and Voline: *Répression de l'Anarchisme en Russie Soviétique* (The Repression of Anarchism in Soviet Russia). Voline made a French translation which appeared at the beginning of 1923. It contained an alphabetical list of the martyrs of Russian anarchism. In 1921-1922, Alexander Berkman, and in 1922-1923, Emma Goldman published a succession of pamphlets on the dramatic events which they had witnessed in Russia.

In their turn, Peter Archinoff and Nestor Makhno himself, escaped Makhnovites who had taken refuge in the West, published their evidence. The two great libertarian classics on the Russian Revolution, *The Guillotine at Work: Twenty Years of Terror in Russia* by G. P. Maximoff and *The Unknown Revolution* by Voline, came much later, during the Second World War, and were written with the maturity of thought made possible by the passage of the years.

For Maximoff, whose account appeared in America, the lessons of the past brought to him a sure expectation of a better future. The new ruling class in the U.S.S.R. cannot and will not be permanent, and it will be succeeded by libertarian socialism. Objective conditions are driving this development forward: "Is it conceivable . . . that the workers might desire the return of the capitalists to their enterprises? Never! for they are rebelling specifically against exploitation by the State and its bureaucrats." What the workers desire is to replace this authoritarian management of production with their own factory councils, and to unite these councils into one vast national federation. What they desire is workers' self-management. In the same way, the peasants have understood that there can be no question of returning to an individualist economy. Collective agriculture is the only solution, together with the collaboration of the rural collectives with the factory councils and trade unions: in short, the further development of the program of the October Revolution in complete freedom."

Voline strongly asserted that any experiment on the Russian model could only lead to "state capitalism based on an odious exploitation of the masses," the "worst form of capitalism and one which has absolutely nothing to do with the progress of humanity toward a socialist society." It could do nothing but promote "the dictatorship of a single party which leads unavoidably to the repression of all freedom of speech, press, organization, and action, even for revolutionary tendencies, with the sole exception of the party in power," and to a "social inquisition" which suffocates "the very breath of the Revolution." Voline went on to maintain that Stalin "did not fall from the moon." Stalin and Stalinism are, in his view, the logical consequence of the authoritarian system founded and established between 1918 and 1921. "This is the lesson the world must learn from the tremendous and decisive Bol-

shevik experiment: a lesson which gives powerful support to the libertarian thesis and which events will soon make clear to the understanding of all those who grieve, suffer, think, and struggle."

Sad but true, there are still people that allow the genius of Marx to be twisted into Leninism, Maoism and even Stalinism-Marx was no cheerleader for bottom-up direct democracy-though he said much positive- but he certainly did not advocate the police states and authoritarian boot that this century's Leninists or Trotskyists will put up with in the name of 'economic equality'. Next time one of those Revolutionary Communist Party people (RCP-aka the Mao-Moonies) come at you, yell "What about the Ukraine? Kronstadt?.....and Goddamn SPAIN?" ---t.s.

SPAIN:

THE VERY TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN

From Richard Drinnon's biography of Emma Rebel in Paradise

Word of Emma Goldman's retirement had been making the rounds for years. "Goldman is past now," Laurence Stallings had chortled in 1931-he could not even admit his obvious pleasure "in baiting a toothless tiger." Several years later the editor of Harper's also had marked her case closed: "It is strange what time does to political causes. A generation ago it seemed to many American conservatives as if the opinions which Emma Goldman was expressing might sweep the world. Now she fights almost alone for what seems a lost cause; contemporary radicals are overwhelmingly opposed to her, . . ." Utterly unwilling to be relegated to the past, she ignored these premature obituary notices: "I am very far from retirement," she grimly informed an interested young couple in 1936. "In fact I am more than ever [determined] that my life should end as it began, fighting." Yet she did not reckon with Berkman's suicide within a few months. After this blow, alone now in a way she had never been before, she felt herself slipping deeper and deeper into a mood of grief and despair.

At this moment, on the nineteenth of July 1936, the Spanish workers offered the first real resistance to European fascism by beating off a military insurrection and by putting down the cornerstones for a far-reaching social revolution. Guided by their faith in anarchism, which had strong roots in Spain going back to the time of Bakunin, the revolutionists set up agrarian and industrial collectives and seriously sought to introduce a future of freedom and equality. Emma followed the news of their heroic efforts with an intensity of interest which soon made her own personal problems seem almost inconsequential. She was therefore overjoyed when Augustine Souchy, Secretary of the Comité Anarcho-Sindicalista, called on her to serve in the great undertaking. His letter "contained an invitation to come to Barcelona," she jubilantly reported to her niece. "Believe me my heart jorriped [sic] and the crushing weight that was pressing down on my heart since Sasha['s] death left me as by magic."

Members of the powerful Confederación Nacional del

Trabajo (CNT) and the Federación Anarquista Ibarica (FAI) welcomed her with open arms when she arrived in Barcelona in September, 1936. Ten thousand of her comrades turned out for a mass meeting to hear her place them under the responsibility of being a "shining example to the rest of the world." For the first time she was in a city where the anarchists were in control and the prospect was enormously pleasing: "I have come to you as to my own," she declared, "for your ideal has been my ideal for forty five years and it will remain to my last breath." Brushing aside for the moment her misgivings over the idealistic innocence of the Spanish anarchists, she took up the struggle with all her old vigor and spirit. There was work to be done and she was needed.

The Catalan workers wanted her to take charge of the CNT/FAI press service and propaganda bureau in England. So that she would be able to speak with firsthand knowledge, they made every effort to show her their major accomplishments and their major problems. She was even helped to travel to the Aragon front, where she could see for herself whether the anarchist troops had been "militarized." Now sixty-seven, the old lady sat in trenches within hearing distance of Franco's snipers and talked to Buenaventura Durruti, the already legendary leader of the anarchist troops, and to "simple, unsophisticated workers, who had flocked to the front to stake their all in freeing Spain." She came away from the front reassured by the lack of barrack discipline and the belief of the soldiers, from officer to private, in equalitarianism. Despite her concern that this revolution, like all modern revolutions, had to spring from the loins of war, she was pleased that the anarchists had the reputation of being the best fighters on the line.

Aware that the underlying problem of Spain was its feudal agrarian system, she visited as many agricultural collectives as she could. She was particularly impressed, by Albate de Cinca, a collectivized village in the Province of Huesca. The large estate, which had formerly belonged to an absentee owner, had been divided among the five thousand residents, each family receiving a share proportionate to its size. Although much of their land had lain fallow for years and they had little modern machinery, the new owners had made remarkable progress in their common venture. They were understandably proud of their acquisition of a threshing machine and of their ability to cultivate the land efficiently without the direction of any outside manager or state agent. "The Cinca comrades saw it to be their duty to demonstrate the superior quality of work in common," Emma observed, and was even more pleased by the fact there was no Cheka, no state machinery in sight.

The collectivization of the factories had proceeded less dramatically, for the workers were handicapped by the opposition of the Madrid government, the flight of many technicians and managers, the increasing difficulty of obtaining raw materials from abroad, and the loss of major areas of both domestic and foreign markets. Nevertheless, she was "amazed at the capacity of the supposedly untalented workers." The Metal Syndicate was an outstanding example. Within two days it had converted an automobile, assembling plant into a munitions factory "and when I arrived in September 1936 it was already working three shifts and producing the only arms loyalist Spain had at her disposal during that critical period."

What she saw added to her conviction that the Spanish anarchists had proved that the Bolshevik pattern of revolution was not inevitable, that it was possible to have a constructive revolution worked out in freedom. After her visits to the collectives she informed a large meeting of the youth of the FAI that "your revolution will destroy forever [the no-

tion] that anarchism stands for chaos." No one could expect a revolution to run smoothly and this one was being carried out under the extraordinarily difficult conditions of an armed attack. (From her point of view there was only one answer to this: I have and do maintain," she wrote, "that an armed counter-revolutionary and fascist attack can be met in no way except by an armed defence.") All things considered, she was not prepared to be sharply critical of such excesses as the destruction of churches. After all, how could one be too critical of a people who, in the face of the approaching danger on the Madrid and Sargossa fronts, sent a thousand delegates to Barcelona to discuss the modern school and the dangers of centralization?

Before she left for England, she was taken high in the Pyrenees to see a libertarian educational experiment. "By way of confession I have to own up that I was literally pulled up a mountain of 4,000 feet above the level of the sea, and this only with the help of Professor Mawa on the one side and the young children of Comrade Prig Elias on the other. A troupe of children singing lustily led the way. Another troupe with a cinema operator followed. I admit it was an exhausting feat but I would not have missed it for worlds. On the very top of the mountain we found a small white peasant house, and a patch of land. We were greeted by a large streamer which contained in bold letters the name of the colony-Mon Nou (New World). Its credo read as follows"Children are the new world. And all dreamers are children; those who are moved by kindness and beauty It was with a kind of anticipatory regret that she came down from this mountain of idealism to the "Old murderous world" below, down to her hotel on the Plaza de Catalunya. Never again would she be so happy.

Although she almost preferred dying in Spain to living in England, she went to London in December to enlist the economic and moral support so desperately needed by her Spanish comrades.

The international response to the Spanish conflict made her task virtually hopeless from the beginning. The Tory government in Britain had persuaded France and other nations to adhere to a so-called doctrine of nonintervention out of fear both of provoking a showdown with the German and Italian backers of the insurgents and of antagonizing General Franco, who dominated territory in which many British nationals had sizable investments. (The United States obligingly followed suit in January, 1937, with a Roosevelt-sponsored neutrality act which denied supplies to the loyalists.) In October, 1936, Russia commenced an unofficial intervention on the loyalist side, but did so, of course, to further its own interests. These interests included checking the expansion of Germany, maintaining its defensive alliance with France, and strengthening the previously insignificant Spanish Communist party. These interests did not include supporting the libertarian Spanish revolution at the double risk of weakening its own authoritarian influence in Spain and of alienating, during this united front period, its property-conscious allies in France and elsewhere. In a sentence, the one thing uniting all the major powers was their opposition to the Spanish Revolution.

Trade-unionists and Socialists abroad might still have been expected to demonstrate some solidarity with the Spanish workers, but, as Vinnia soon discovered, they had easily accepted the line that the war against Franco had to come first and the revolution afterward. In vain did the CNT-FAI protest that the revolution and the war were inseparable-to pursue the latter without the former was to rob the people of their will to resist fascism and to postpone the revolution indefinitely, perhaps forever. To the matter-of-fact Labourites, however, this was little more than infantile leftism, a leftism which blocked the neces-

sary centralization of military and industrial effort. Eventually some even accepted the Stalinist-inspired view that the revolutionists were "stabbing the Republic in the back" as part of a perfidious Fascist plot. The upshot of all this "realism" and misrepresentation was that the European working class maintained a peculiarly detached attitude toward the decisive Spanish conflict. Its involvement hardly went beyond minor contributions to the various aid funds.

No individual could have turned the tide of opinion which was running against the Spanish anarchists, but Emma Goldman did what she could. She opened a propaganda office in London for the CNT-FAI and edited an English-language edition of its Spanish bulletin. To combat the systematic denigration of the anarchist position in the press she organized letter-writing campaigns and wrote letters of her own to the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Evening Standard*, and other papers. She contributed articles to *Spain and the World*, a fortnightly journal. She took the lead in arranging concerts, exhibitions of Catalan art, and film showings to raise money for her comrades. She organized the Committee To Aid Homeless Spanish Women and Children, with herself as the "Honorable Secretary," Stella Churchill as treasurer, and Sir Barry Jackson, Sybil Thorndike, Lady Playfair, and other prominent persons as sponsors. Later she persuaded Havelock Ellis, C. E. M. Joad, John Cowper Powys, Fenner Brockway, Rebecca West, George Orwell, and Herbert Read to lend their names and support to another of her committees, the International Anti-Fascist Solidarity, which was one more attempt at "resurrecting the dead in England."

The dead stubbornly refused resurrection. Honest confidence men were scarcely more rare than left intellectuals who honestly and sympathetically portrayed the cause of the Spanish anarchists. She learned from bitter experience what George Orwell was to discover later, that it was almost impossible to get anything printed or said in their defense. And it was not until the publication of Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* (1938), as she wrote a friend, that there was a break in the "conspiracy of silence against us.... For the first time since the struggle began in 1936 someone outside our ranks has come forward to paint the Spanish anarchists as they really are "12 Exasperated beyond words with the English intelligentsia, she became more grim, more contemptuous of those who were unwilling even to bear the anarchist side of the story, and more determined than ever that they should hear it.

She needed all of her unbelievable tenacity to get through the countless lectures she delivered in behalf of the CNT-FAI. In *Lover under Another Name* (1953), Ethel Mannin has shown Emma, with whom she was closely associated in those days, in action at a more or less typical meeting. Although part of a work of fiction and written long after the event, Miss Mannin's account has the ring of substantial authenticity: A "short thickset scowling elderly woman with grey hair and thick glasses," Emma entered the crowded hall and sat "glowering ferociously at the audience." When she rose to speak, her supporters cheered, the Fascists booed, and the Communists cat-called and sang "L'Internationale." Cries rang out to call the Police:

But Red Emma roared on, announcing that she had had fifty years of dealing with mobs and no one could shout her down. And by God she was right. No one could. I couldn't keep some lines from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* out of my mind:

"Rintah roars, and shakes his fires in the burden'd air; Hungry clouds swag on the deep."

I always liked that word "swag." Red Emma's voice swag on the waves of opposition. Her speech over and the collection made, she still did not let her bearers go, but "began pitching into the audience for its smallness though the hall was packed-and the paltriness of its three-hundredpound contribution to the cause for which the Spa-aa-nish people, she yelled at them, were giving their life's blood." The audience sat "enchanted under the attack, and when she had finished applauded wildly." Toothless Old Tiger indeed!

But by now she was playing mainly on her nerve, for, in addition to the insuperable or almost insuperable obstacles she faced in England, she was deeply disturbed by some of the compromises of her Spanish comrades. While still in Barcelona in 1936 she had written that "the end evidently does justify the most impossible means . . . and what is more tragic is that there is no return to first principles. On the contrary, one is pulled deeper and deeper into the mire of compromise. The ends were the defeat of Franco and the survival of the revolution. But defeat of Franco apparently demanded participation in the moderate popular-front government in Madrid in November, 1936, the world had been treated to the curious spectacle of anarchists becoming ministers of state. Much worse, from Emma's point of view, was the acceptance of arms (with the inevitable strings attached) from the Soviet Union in order to wage the fight against Franco and attempt to bypass the nonintervention policy of the capitalistic nations. Bugged down by these basic compromises, the anarchists found themselves part of the government, though they bated and feared any government; they found themselves shoulder to shoulder with the Communists, though they bated and feared their ingrained authoritarianism and felt that participation in the united front was in some measure a betrayal of the anarchists who languished in Russian prisons; they found themselves fighting in increasingly disciplined, centralized armies, though they hated and feared the consequences of war and militarism.

From the beginning Emma had privately argued against the course chosen by the leaders of the CNT-FAI. Even before Berkman's death she had written her old friend opposing the participation of the Spanish anarchists in elections and utterly rejecting the idea of any common activity with the Communists. She felt that such a denial of anarchist philosophy was both futile and dangerous-it was, moreover, absurd, for the Communists were just as great enemies of the anarchists as the Fascists and would, if they were given a chance, eradicate the anarchists. Now she argued with the leaders of the CNT/FAI for an acceleration of the revolution, the retention of people's militias. She warned them that their acceptance of ministries would undermine their usefulness and cut them off from their rank and file, that militarization was antithetical to the spirit and principles of anarchism, and, above all, that their collaboration with the Communists was fatal."

As in a game of chess, each move of the Spanish anarchists lead to another. Emma's personal horror was that she knew this but was unable to convince her comrades that each of their compromises made a final debacle more

inevitable. Her letters were filled with the painful realization of impending disaster:

[November 14, 1936] All is not well. Our people are in a hornet's nest.... Apropos of Russia darling, I hate to disappoint you. Russia never does anything handsomely.

[January 5, 1937] The so-called United Front hangs on a straw. We would only make it harder for the CNT/FAI if we were to come out with plain talk.

[May 4, 1937] Well, I have taken my place with the Spanish comrades. I can not accept their every act, but their courage, fortitude and even more their passionate devotion to the Revolution make me decide I am with them to the bitter end.

As she wrote this last letter, Communists were fighting anarchists in the Barcelona streets.

From early 1937 the Communist-controlled Valencia government had been slowly strangling the revolution through carefully devised taxes and decrees which placed the collectives and armed forces of the workers under centralized control. On May 3 1937 government forces attempted to seize the Barcelona telephone exchange held by the anarchists. Fighting broke out with the government forces taking the initiative against the anarchists, the barricades were quickly put up, and the infamous "May Days" had commenced. But the anarchist spokesmen, unwilling to weaken the anti-Franco forces by waging an all-out fight, soon called the workers off the barricades. Restrained by no comparable scruples, the Communists and their allies then commenced a long line of reprisals against the "Trotskyites" and the "uncontrollable" anarchists. Political prisoners filled the jails in the old, familiar pattern. The bitter end of the revolution had come, as Emma had predicted, with the Communists leading the counterrevolution.

Still Emma publicly defended the leaders of the CNT/FAI and appealed for understanding of their predicament. She continued to keep her criticisms of their compromises to her private correspondence and discussions. For the first time in her life, she had one set of opinions for the outside world and another set for her intimate friends. Calling from the first, her position became more intolerable as the tragedy progressed.

At the end of 1937 Marino Vasquez, National Secretary of the CNT, requested Emma to be a delegate at an extraordinary session of the International Workingmen's Association. At the meeting in Paris Emma was attacked on the right by those who thought, like Max Nettlau, that she had already been too critical of the actions of the CNT/FAI and on the left by those who thought, like Alexander Shapiro, that she had become an apologist for their egregious compromises and mistakes. A left oppositionist all her life, Emma had to hold her own inner doubts in check to make the best of her new experience of defending a centrist position: "Did I not know that the Spanish people see in government a mere makeshift, to be kicked overboard at will-and that they had never been deluded and corrupted by the parliamentary myth, I should perhaps be more alarmed for the future of the C.N.T./F.A.I. But with Franco at the gate of Madrid, I could hardly blame them for choosing a lesser evil participation in the Government rather than Dictatorship, the most deadly evil." Although her statement was filled with compassion for the dilemma of the Spanish anarchists, it lacked any real conviction that their decisions could be justified. Probably no one at the session was less convinced than Emma herself by her argument based on historical necessity and the lesser evil.

In publicly defending the course pursued by the Spanish

anarchists, Emma was indeed swept away by her sympathies. As she put it in one of her letters, she felt about the CNT-FAI inconsistencies "as a mother feels toward her condemned son." To another comrade she declared that "it is as appropriate to sit in judgement over our comrades now as it were to sit in judgement on a man condemned to death. All theories must be set aside at present and our efforts increased to our utmost to help our comrades I" Although her sympathy for her Spanish comrades did her credit and undoubtedly her perspective on Spanish problems was changed by hearing the roar of bombs in Barcelona, she could not set theories aside without reaping the consequences. She knew at the time, what others have only since learned, that even a victory over Franco with USSR help meant ultimate defeat. Her failure to point this out, publicly and plainly, represented a retreat from her most effective political role, that of uncompromisingly honest criticism. The defense of basic compromises of principle might better have been left to the professional politicians.

In the last analysis, however, Emma remained essentially a rebel rather than a revolutionist. To a novelist friend who questioned the worth of revolutions if they "stifle the creative spirit," she promised: "One thing you can rest assured-that if the C.N.T.-F.A.I. were really to conquer-were really to become the sole economic and spiritual force and were then to attempt repression, I would be the first to sever my connection with them."²⁰ Then she would rebel against the revolution itself. Her motherly forgiveness, which had caused her to stray from her real political vocation, did not extend to any tampering with basic freedoms.

Even though she had long lived with a presentiment of their defeat, she was overwhelmed by grief when her Spanish comrades finally went under. In spite of all the compromises and frustrations, she had had a real glimpse in Spain of the New World which she had worked for decades to bring into being. On that first trip of hers in 1936 she had seen a community in which ideals were actually working. It was a community which was not dedicated either to money-grubbing or to the rationalized terror: bootlicking subservience of the many to the few had been replaced by genuine I-and-thou fraternal relationships; men and women were encouraged to be free; and children were encouraged to dream. Picasso's very great painting of a woman with a dead child in "Guernica" (1937) expresses the kind of screaming mental anguish Emma felt when this community was crushed. "It's as though you had wanted a child all your life," she told a friend, "and at last, when you had almost given up hoping, it had been given to you-only to die soon after it was born!"

As a last gesture of support, she went to Canada to raise money and sympathy for the lost cause. In Toronto on her seventieth birthday, June 27, 1939, she received a message that meant a great deal to her. Marino Vasquez, the CNT leader who had taken refuge in Paris, greeted the tired old lady in the name of the Spanish Libertarian Movement. His tribute, complete with Latin flourishes, was only a trifle overdrawn: "You are the incarnation of the eternal flame of the ideal which you have demonstrated in your life. The Spanish militants admire and revere you, as Anarchists should admire and value those of a great heart and abiding humanism for all mankind. . . . We declare you our spiritual mother."

The May Days-Barcelona Spain 1937

Freedom Press-London- 1998 -a pamphlet book with essays by Augustin Souchy-Burnett Bolloten-Jose Peirats-Emma Goldman..... excerpts here....

Prelude to the May Days Jose Peirats

By the beginning of 1937 the new State was ready to take on the revolutionaries. Until then its motto had been, 'The war must be won before the revolution.' Now its motto became, 'Before the war is won the revolution must be crushed.' A leader of the Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia (PSUC) had declared, 'Barcelona must be taken before Zaragoza.'

The revolution was represented by the CNT-FAI, the left wing of the Socialist Party and the Marxist Workers Unity Party (POUM). The counterrevolution included the Communist Party and its affiliates, the regional and national Republican parties and the right-wing Socialists led by Indalecio Prieto. Whatever their fundamental differences, the latter groups were united by their opposition to the revolution. Communists and anarchists opened hostilities on May 3, 1937.

There are those who claim that the events of May were part of a vast scheme to overthrow the President and Minister of War, Francisco Largo Caballero. Largo Caballero himself believed that the Communist offensive was directed only against himself. In his book, *Mis Recuerdos*, he writes, 'The Communist ministers took advantage of the May events to precipitate the crisis in the government that they had long been preparing.' In fact, the scheme was even more ambitious, for it was an attack on the entire revolution. If the objective had been merely the government in Valencia, then why did so much happen in Catalonia? The answer, of course, is that Barcelona was the stronghold of the CNT-FAI, which led the revolution. The anarcho-syndicalists controlled the Catalan government. Their unions and collectives had a strong influence on the economy, and their war industries and militia columns at the front affected the progress of the war.

A systematic bid to take over the State began August/September, 1936, when Marcel Rosenberg and Antonov-Ovseenko became, respectively, USSR Ambassador and Consul General in Spain. In coordinated operations, the Ambassador, with Communist Party help, worked to impose Russian policies on the central government; the Consul-General, with PSUC help, worked on the Catalan government to the same end. The Republic's diplomatic isolation and the Soviet military aid facilitated their operations. The Soviet aid was not disinterested: since December, 1936, the gold reserves of the Bank of Spain had been held in Moscow as security for commercial transactions between the two countries.

The Communists turned against Largo Caballero when he resisted the Soviet Ambassador's political and military meddling. Also, he had rejected a proposal for merging the Socialist and Communist Parties into a single workers' party called the Unified Socialist Party of Spain (PSUC).

In December, 1936, Stalin sent a personal letter to Caballero with insolent political advice, telling him to protect the petty bourgeoisie and put an end to the revolution. His pretext was the need to reassure the western democracies belonging to the Non-intervention Pact. In February, 1937, Stalin wrote again to Largo Caballero, openly proposing the formation of a single proletarian party.

Caballero's reply to the first letter had been courteous but evasive. The second response was a flat refusal. The Spanish Communist Party immediately opened fire.

After his experience with the merger of the youth groups and formation of the Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia, Caballero knew what to expect. He, the 'Spanish Lenin', was destroyed by the agit-prop. Caballero wrote, 'The portraits disappeared everywhere. They took pleasure in destroying the idol they themselves had created.'

On February 8, 1937, the propitious moment arrived: Malaga fell to the enemy. At once the Communists produced a propaganda campaign playing on the emotional aspect of the disaster. They chose as scapegoat General Asensio, Largo Caballero's assistant in the Ministry of War. Unlike Generals Miaja, Rojo, Pozas and others, Asensio had refused to join the Communist Party. The campaign against him seemed to punish him for his refusal to toe the Communist Party line and to subvert the authority of the head of government and Minister of War.

At the same time, Caballero's personal enemies within the Socialist Party and UGT worked to isolate him from his own party. On February 24, 1937, his friends protested publicly that a number of Socialist Party activists had been detained without 'the knowledge of the regular police. In mid-April anarchist newspapers denounced a rash of assassinations of peasants by 'persons carrying CP cards'. Shortly before, in late March, there had been a clash between the collectivists of Vilanesa (Valencia) and the police, after a protest against the commercial tariff policies of the government. The police exceeded their authority, assaulting and destroying the collective's headquarters, in spite of the peasants' fierce resistance. At the same time Francisco Maroto, anarchist commander of militia on the Granada front, was accused of complicity with the enemy. The source of these allegations was the Governor of Almeria, Gabriel Mor6n,, a Communist masquerading as a Republican. Maroto had made several forays into enemy territory, including the city of Granada, which the enemy had held since the first days of the uprising. The Communists based their charges of high treason on these incursions. The National Committee of the CNT came to Maroto's defense, 'If Maroto entered Granada, it is because he was more skilled than Mor6n, "the hero of Almeria".' Maroto was condemned to death, but his sentence was commuted. In 1939 he was shot by those who won the war.

April 20, 1937 saw the abscess that had been sapping the strength of the Madrid Junta of Defense burst. The Junta had been formed from all parties and unions when the government abandoned Madrid in November, 1936. Within it, the Communist Party gave full rein to its sLtarian intrigues. Its Counselor for Public Order was Jos6 Cazorla, a former Young Socialist, now a Communist in the JSU like Santiago Carrillo and others. Cazorla detained a youth who turned out to be nephew of the Undersecretary of Justice, Mariano Sdnchez Roca. For seventy days the fate of the youth was unknown until Melchor Rodriguez, special delegate for Prisons, learned he was being held in a Communist Party 'cheka' (secret, unofficial prison) on calle Ferndndez de la Hoz: This sensational discovery led to others. It was said that Cazorla was ransoming prisoners to get money for the Party. The government took advantage of these accusations to dissolve the Junta of Defense on April 23 and instal a Municipal Council in its place.

The scandal of the 'cheka' had only begun. The existence of another, that in Murcia, was made public. Castilla Libre, the CNT paper, published this note:

"We have not opposed, nor will we oppose the shooting of any fascist, whoever he may be. But we will always be opposed to torture. Yet not only fascists were tortured in Murcia. Members of revolutionary groups and Popular Front parties were sadistically tortured in its infamous secret prison. Even a CNT member ... suffered the terrible torture of having his eyes torn out before his wounded body disappeared."

The Socialist Party press joined the protest campaign, for many of its members had also been tortured in Murcia. The dissolution of the Madrid Junta Of Defense embittered the campaign against Largo Caballero. He responded with decrees that purged police forces of Communist Party members. He wrote in his book,

"I issued another decree revoking the appointment of all Commissioners named without my signature. One of those most responsible had been Alvarez del Vayo, Minister of State, member of the Socialist Party, and Commissioner (General), who until then had been my unconditional friend. He called himself a Socialist but actually he was entirely in the service of the Communist Party. I made him appear before me; I reproached him for his conduct and for the appointments made without my knowledge and signature, which numbered about 200 in favour of the Communists."

From that moment the Communists sought a successor for the head of government. In his book, *I Was Stalin's Agent*, ex-general Walter Krivitsky reveals, Caballero was then universally considered the Kremlin favourite, but Stashevsky had already picked Negrin as his successor because Caballero had not supported the GPU activity which under Orlov's direction had begun in Spain, as in Russia, a great purge of all dissidents, independents and antistalinists whom the party lumped together under the name 'Trotskyists'.

A counterrevolution accompanied the political changes. On November 26, 1936, CNT and UGT national representatives had signed a preliminary agreement that seemed to foreshadow an alliance between the two federations. The Communist Party claimed there was a conspiracy of labour unions against the political parties, in particular the Communist Party. The Republican parties took the bait, and the right wing of the Socialist Party renewed negotiations with the CP for a Single Proletarian Party.

Shortly afterward, the first division within the Catalan government was instigated by the Soviet Consul-General. He published a note accusing the POUM paper, *La Batalla*, of 'selling out to international fascism'. That note, brazenly abusing consular prerogatives, contained a synthesis of all successive slanders against the POUM. It was published on November 27, and the crisis of the Catalan government occurred on December 13.

The PSUC (stalinist) declared that it would end the crisis only if the POUM was excluded from the government. This purge served as a preliminary to the physical elimination of POUM leaders and also as the first move against the CNT and FAI. Throughout the world Communist parties were engaging in 'anti-Trotskyist' purges, a persecution began when Kirov was 'assassinated' in 1934. These sectarian struggles were only part of the Stalinist hostility to the POUM: there was also competition for control of the unions. The POUM had a great influence in the Catalan UGT, to which it had given life long before the creation of the PSUC. After July 19, 1936, the parties opposing the CNT had given the UGT a new image and from then on it would find its strength in the petty bourgeoisie. The Stalinists had to eliminate POUM influence in UGT unions. Hence, the crisis in the Catalan government was instigated to eliminate the POUM politically.

The crisis was resolved on December 15, by the creation of a 'government without political parties' formed by the UGT, CNT, Sharecroppers' Union, and the Republican Left of Catalonia representing the petty bourgeoisie. There was hardly any change in

people: Comorera and Valeds, who had represented the PSUC in the government, now represented the UGT. It was they who had precipitated the crisis; they were the same characters in different costumes..But the POUM had been eliminated.

In the new government the different departments were redistributed. The Supply Department passed from the hands of CNT member Domenech to the Communist Comorera (secretary general of the PSUC) who immediately began a slanderous campaign against his predecessor. He stepped up rationing of articles of primary necessity, especially bread, and attributed chaos in the bread industry and a scarcity of flour to the previous administrator and collectivization. The truth is that large quantities of goods were stored away to provoke public protest. When the people protested, Communist agents started rumours that the CNT was responsible for the bread shortage, and this led to well-orchestrated demonstrations against the CNT.

About that time, on January 20, 1937, a Soviet ship arrived at the port of Barcelona with a declared cargo of 901 tons of wheat, 882 tons of sugar, and 568 tons of butter. The people in the street joked a lot about the butter, since it was hardly ever used in Spain. They let themselves believe the 'butter' was really guns and planes. Even though it was confirmed in official circles that it was real butter made from cows' milk, nobody believed it. Lower government officials themselves ended up believing that the Russians had disguised war materials in order to circumvent the controls of the Non-Intervention Pact. The truth is that the Russians never unloaded war materials in Barcelona, but rather in Alicante or Cartagena, far from the anarchist columns. The Russian government bolstered the reputation of the Catalan government's new Councillor for Supplies with these shipments of foodstuffs.

Another accomplishment of the new government of Catalonia was the reorganization of the police. On December 24, The Councillor for Internal Security, a Communist named Artemio Ayguadé, appointed as a new Police Commissioner a PSUC member, Eusebio Rodríguez Salas. The new commissioner quickly began a campaign against 'uncontrolled elements' who, according to him, were undertaking unauthorized investigations and executions. - Another of his sensationalist campaigns was against the so-called 'clandestine cemeteries', really the burial places for rebels killed on the first day of the rebellion. Executions like these had taken place throughout the republican territory and all the parties and groups had participated, above all the Communists, who now wanted to lay the blame on their political rivals. To make a better impression on foreign observers, Rodríguez Salas went about digging up the bodies and encouraging funeral processions of widows and other family members. The rebel radio, especially Radio Sevilla, took great pleasure in commenting on the macabre activities of the new Police Commissioner. These intrigues also were ultimately directed at the CNT-FAL.

On January 23, 1937, the Catalan UGT, guided by the PSUC, held a congress of small peasant landowners. The congress, really a propaganda stunt against the collectives, was run by non-peasant Communist speakers. These shady tactics soon bore fruit among the smallholders opposed to collectivisation. They took arms in La Fatarella, a small village in Tarragona, and were harshly repressed by the Control Patrols, a kind of mobile police formed by all the parties and groups in August, 1936. The punitive action of the patrols aided by the Assault Guards of the Catalan government left 30 dead among the smallholders, and several dead and wounded patrolmen. Responsibility for the event was collective, but the PSUC leaders sought to blame it entirely on the POUM and the CNT.

The conflict between the two sides escalated and a few isolated incidents occurred on the streets of Barcelona when the police of Rodríguez Salas tried to disarm all civilians. The Councillor for Internal Security, apparently on his own initiative, decreed the following: the dissolution of the Internal Security Corps formed by all antifascist groups; the dissolution of the Councils of Workers and Soldiers charged with purging the ranks of the old officer corps; the dissolution of the Control Patrols; and the prohibition of policemen, officers and police chiefs from belonging to unions or political parties, under penalty of expulsion. These decrees appeared on March 4, and their publication precipitated a new government crisis in Catalonia.

About this time, ten armoured cars were stolen from the warehouses of the war industries of Barcelona. The robbers were discovered to be high officers in the Vorochilof barracks, which was controlled by the PSUC. Solidaridad Obrera of March 7 commented,

"If they did not remove the tanks-to take them to the front, why was such a brilliant operation undertaken at all? We assume that this was the first step in a dictatorial coup, against which, everybody knows, we would immediately rise."

The new government crisis was precipitated on March 26. As absolute the CNT demanded strict observance of the principle of proportional representation when departments were distributed. It also demanded the revoking of the Decrees of Public Order. A FAI communique said, "The Department of Supplies should serve the interests of the people as a whole, not those of the parties. And Internal Security should not be filching that which is essential to the revolution in progress." The crisis lasted one month, and while it was under negotiation there were moments of dangerous tension. On March 30, the CNT Regional Committee instructed its activists, federations and unions to keep alert and in constant contact.

Another cause of the crisis was the Communist campaign against the Councillor of Defense, the CNT member Francisco Isgleas. He was blamed for the lack of offensive operations on the Aragon front. We have already pointed out that on the Aragon front there was a great lack of weapons and, above all, ammunition. Nevertheless the leaders of the Communist Party presumptuously called the anarchist militiamen cowards. The Communists also slandered Catalan war industries which had been created precisely for the purpose of protecting the militia in Aragon from the sometimes intentional indolence of the central government. After Bilbao, Barcelona was the main centre for heavy industry in Spain. The war industries were mounted under the exigencies of war. Their products were sent to all of the fronts of the Republic. Workers and technicians of the CNT devoted all their skill and professional expertise to the enterprise. It was a true product of the CNT unions.

In a congress organized by the Young Communists in Madrid at the beginning of April, 1937, the speakers cast slurs on the Aragon front, arguing that its paralysis was attributable to its being 75% anarchist. Without any justification, the PSUC Secretary General declared that there existed in Catalonia magnificent war factories given over to the production of pistol bullets. Other speakers added that Catalan war factories were making domestic appliances instead of machine guns and rifles. These allegations were amplified by the official papers of the CP, Mundo Obrero (Valencia) and the PSUC, Treball (Barcelona).

As we have seen, the government crisis in Catalonia lasted exactly one month. It ended on April 26 with the same cabinet as the previous government and a suspension of the

Decrees of Public Order. But the incidents had only begun. On April 25, 1937, in a town near Barcelona called Molins de Llobregat, a mysterious murder took place. At a crossroads, persons unknown fired on an automobile and killed its occupant, the PSUC activist Roldan Cortada. This murder served as a pretext for arresting a number of anarchists in the Bajo Llobregat district. To understand better the mysterious circumstances surrounding the crime, one should know the following:

1. The Bajo Llobregat district was one of the most pro-anarchist in all Catalonia. During the revolutionary movements of January 8 and December 8, 1933, libertarian communism had been proclaimed in Hospitalet de Llobregat, the headquarters of the district committee.

2. The anarchists of Bajo Llobregat had always distinguished themselves by the extremism of their revolutionary fervour. Barcelona conservatives accused the workers of this district of being anti-Catalan, because many of them had emigrated from different regions of Spain, especially Murcia. For the same reason, anarchists of Hospitalet were labeled 'Murcians' and 'foreigners by Catalanist politicians.'

3. After July 19, 1936, Bajo Llobregat had been very heavily collectivised.

4. When the CNT joined the government, the militants of Bajo Llobregat, true to their radical anarchism, formed in opposition movement to the CNT-FAI participation and the militarization of the militia. They published the journal Ideas in Hospitalet de Llobregat which objected to any deviation from libertarianism.

5. In spite of intensive police investigations, Roldan Cortada's murderers could not be found. Nevertheless, several militant anarchists were detained and tried, including Luis Cano, Councillor for Defense of the Town Council of Hospitalet de Llobregat. The judge found Cano and his companions not guilty of the assassination and stated, 'With respect to the central issue of the indictment, neither the aforementioned Cano nor the six prisoners released had any part, direct or indirect, in the Cortada murder.' Cano was convicted only of 'exercising functions limited to the Department of Internal Security'.

6. Let us see who Roldan Cortada was. In the old days he had been a CNT member. Like many other militants, he had taken refuge in France during Primo de Rivera's dictatorship. Afterwards he went to Switzerland, possibly expelled from France like many others who conspired there against the dictatorship. On the eve of the fall of the dictatorship he returned to Spain secretly to continue the struggle against the military regime. In the first years of the Republic, Cortada worked very actively in the Construction Union of Barcelona and was one of the 30 signers of the dissident manifesto in the 1931 schism. Finally, after the military revolt of July 19, Roldan Cortada entered the PSUC, making a name for himself by his attacks on his former comrades.

With these facts we can advance the hypothesis that Roldan Cortada may have been assassinated by the Stalinists themselves to create enmity against the CNT. The site chosen for the attack - an extremist stronghold - makes motives for the attack seem self-evident, especially since Roldan Cortada was a renegade who might have betrayed the secrets of his former organisation when he joined the Communists.

The opposite hypothesis is difficult to sustain. The indicting judge found no evidence of anarchist participation in the crime. Furthermore, in all CNT history there were very few cases of reprisals against its renegades

and these few were only against the gunmen of the Free Unions who, paid by the government, had assassinated CNT members such as Salvador Segui, Evelio Boal, Jos6 Comas and the CNT lawyer, Francisco Layret. The reprisals took place in the first weeks of the revolution, and the main victims were Ram6n Sales, Inocencio Faced and Desiderio Trillas.

The mere act of going over to the enemy had never brought about reprisals. Some of the Communist leaders had once been anarchists. Joaquin Maurin and Andres Nin were the founders of the Communist Party in Catalonia, although they later deviated from the orthodox line. Ram6n Casanellas had taken refuge in Russia after participating in the attack that led to Prime Minister Eduardo Dato's death. On his return to Spain in 1931, he became a Communist leader and undertook campaigns against the confederation with impunity. Another great renegade was Rafael Vidiella, who had been the editor of Solidaridad Obrera in 1922 and was one of the founders of the PSUC. Another leader of the Spanish Communist Party, Manuel Adame, was a CNT member who divided the organization in Andalusia and other provinces when the Republic was proclaimed. Jos6 Didz himself, the secretary general of the Spanish Communist Party during the civil war, had been an anarchist in Andalusia.

It is well known that the CNT never took revenge upon those members who changed their political creed. The violent struggles between anarchists and communists in Seville, Malaga, Cordoba, Granada and so forth were struggles for control between rival groups, never reprisals against renegades.

The exploited the assassination of Roldan Cortada in order to add to the mounting hostility against the CNT and to set the stage for the great provocation that was soon to come. At the funeral, the PSUC organised an imposing demonstration that was 'spontaneously joined' by military forces and police, who paraded for hours down the main streets of Barcelona in a provocative manner, shouting threats against the anarchists. Cortada became the martyr, the Calvo Sotelo of the Communist crusade.

Soon threats were realised. Within a few days, Stalinists and carabinero troops from the central government clashed with the CNT militia who had been guarding the French frontier since July 19, 1936. Near Puigcerda, three CNT activists were killed in an ambush. The agitation spread to the whole frontier when confederal reinforcements arrived from Lerida, Aragon and Seo de Urgel. The incident ended only after the Barcelona CNT committees intervened and handed the town of Puigcerda over to central government troops.

And so the first of May arrived, a day traditionally celebrated 'in Spain in memory of the Chicago martyrs. The tension in the air spoiled any celebration of the brotherhood of the revolution. The central government, on pretext of support for fighters on the fronts and the need for war materials declared the day to be a 'day of work'. In Catalonia, the police 'worked' hard, harassing civilians with searches in the streets and other investigations. CNT members were disarmed and detained. Union cards and other confederal documents were destroyed in the presence of their holders, who were further subjected to gross indignities.

On May 2 Solidaridad Obrera admonished the government in the following terms:

'The guarantee of the revolution is the proletariat in arms. To disarm the people is to put oneself on the other side of the barricade. No matter how much of a councillor or a commissioner one may be, one cannot order the disarming of workers who struggle against fascism with more selflessness and heroism than all the politicians of the rearguard. Workers! Let none of you be disarmed under any circumstances! That is the watchword'

This was the prelude to the great drama.

(end for this issue)

Hollow City: The Siege of San Francisco and the Crisis of American Urbanism

Rebecca Solnit with photographs by Susan Schwartzenberg

Verso Books.

Review by James Tracy

San Francisco's current housing crisis has finally made it into the gaze of academia; as well it should, since the "siege of San Francisco" speaks volumes towards contemporary race and class relations in general. There are rumored to be a half-dozen books in the works-tales of our city's eviction mania and first out the gate is Rebecca Solnit's *Hollow City: the Siege of San Francisco and the Crisis of American Urbanism*.

Solnit's moral outrage at gentrification is unquestionable and the reader can genuinely detect her empathy carried by a lucid and enviable prose. Much of the book is written in first person so we are truly seeing our Bagdad-by-the-Bay through her eyes. Solnit's eye for social detail illuminates just why gentrification is a tragedy. The most valuable part of the book however, is the history of the destruction of the Western Addition, South of Market and Manilatown neighborhoods during the 1960's and 1970's. It serves to remind us that the "crisis" we live under now is hardly anything new or accidental—simply the result of decades of social engineering.

When Solnit returns to the present is when the book begins to falter and ultimately fails. This is laid out in the books' thesis "Hollow City focuses on artists, particularly visual artists, because artists are the indicator species of the ecosystem: from their situation can be gauged the overall bread the of the margin for noncommercial neighborhood activity, whether that activity is artistic, spiritual or social."

James Baldwin's famous quote "If they come for you in the morning, they'll be back for me at night." should be particularly instructive here. In the morning, the real estate industry went after it's usual prey: working class people, poor people and communities of color. Late into the evening, the beast reawakened for a midnight snack of artists. In this context, the idea of artists as indicators of an ecosystem is absurd.

Equally absurd is the notion of the production of art as an essentially noncommercial activity. One only need to look at the price tags in galleries to debunk that. An analysis that is billed as coming from a place on or around "the frontlines of gentrification" would be expected to contain both voices taken from a variety of communities, not just artists. The only voices of color in the book are small entries from artists of color. The main philosophical debate is between Salon dot.com's Carol Lloyd "I'm a progressive too, but I got a job and stopped whining." and the "Mission Yuppie Eradication Project's Kevin Keating "Vandalize yuppie cars! Make their bars into ruins! Squat the lofts!"

As this unfolds it is difficult to repress the notion that *Hollow City* is AWOL from the frontlines, and at points, resembles a tourist ride through classwarfare. The focus on visual artists, makes one wonder if the tour wasn't given with the windows rolled up and the doors locked. Resistance is blind-sided here as well. While the historical instances are well documented, the more current ones are ignored. Solnit asserts that there has been no resistance to gentrification in the 1990's up until about 1998. What accurately happened was that throughout the 1990's com-

munities waged many organizing campaigns against gentrification. It was until late 1999 that these efforts gained a more coherent multi-racial and mass character. Deleted from the record are the struggles of North Beach Public Housing residents organizing against displacement, direct action squatting campaigns, a successful electoral campaign which defeated the landlord's attempt at ending rent control, and immigrants successfully fighting against federal housing exclusion laws. Maybe it's because too few of these participants paint pictures or dabble in multi-media. Despite it's valuable historical work and beautiful prose, *Hollow City* ultimately rings hollow: it accomplishes exactly what gentrification does: an act of exclusion.

James Tracy is an opinionated bastard who has spent the past ten years fighting landlords and public housing authorities.--(and has worked with the EDN, MAC, and with Chris Daly on his campaign--ts)

CHALLENGE TO IDIOTS

(sf chronicle aug 96 letter)

Editor — I want to challenge all the pro-immigration idiots out there, to give a practical, realistic, contemporary argument —instead of an emotional, historical, fuzzy-brained liberal argument— to explain how you can justify your support for continual unending immigration, when there are not enough jobs and parking spaces available for all the people living in this country right now? And what is your solution to the problem of raw sewage and trash disposal?

----- RICHARD LEWIS

Reply—an argument without being emotional AND historical? Seems like you threw out any parameters of discussion sir. Raw sewage? Parking problems? These are caused by immigrants? Unending immigration? Hardly any open doors here, ask an immigrant. Not enough jobs? When has full employment ever existed with these economics!???

"Diddley squat. That's what I got. You wanna know what it's like begging you mother fuckers for some food? I gotta smile, I doon wanna smile. I wanna hit sum you in the face. But I don't like jail. They got there, five guys fightin' over shitting. At least here I can shit on yer goddamn steps! Sumtin' for you to see in the morning!"
-man on the street

"Revolution? You dum-ass. They'll just kill you all. That's why I drink. At least then I can kill myself. One RIGHT I got left. I can't even sleep in the goddamn park anymore."
-man on the street

"The argument projected to convince him that no Negro could be on the "other side" of the worker had degenerated into a depressing sociological discussion."

-Chester Himes "Lonely Crusade"

RACE, THE FINAL FRONTIER

The following questions were taken from the National Forum on People's Differences, a Web site that encourages users to post the questions they've "always been too embarrassed or uncomfortable to ask."

- Why do white people smell like wet dogs when they come out of the rain?
- My mother told me that black people dare not go into the rain with hair uncovered because their hair would not dry quickly enough to avoid becoming "sour" (which I understood to mean developing an unpleasant odor). Is this true?
- Why don't more black people surf?
- Why don't white people use tissues or handkerchiefs (instead of bare fingers) to clean their noses? Black people consider this behavior rude and nasty.
- I would like to know why some black men wear a plastic shower cap covering their hair.
- I've noticed that my Caucasian neighbors spend a lot more time on lawn care. Do Caucasians see lawn care as basic home maintenance, or is it more of a hobby?
- Why does it seem that Caucasians, more than other races, enjoy flirting with death by engaging in activities such as skydiving, bungee jumping, mountain climbing, and car and speedboat racing?
- Why is it that when meeting white people for the first time in a social setting, within five minutes they ask you what you do for a living?
- A white friend told me that no subjects of an intimate nature (money, affection, etc.) were discussed in her home. Is this typical in white households?
- I am a black mate who takes the time to iron my clothes every day. For some reason, my white co-workers find this interesting. Why is it that white people do not iron their clothing?
- Why do most black people wear their hats backwards? I have tried this many times, and I do not think this is comfortable.
- Do black people not have pets as much as other races?
- Why do some African Americans name their children such hard ~to-pronounce and -spell names? It seems to me that some of these would be a drawback later in life, when one enters the real world.
- I am a recruiter and meet a great number of college-educated professionals. Why do white prospects with marginal qualifications assume they are extremely qualified for a position, while black applicants with better qualifications doubt their abilities?
- Growing up in Queens, N.Y., it was a "requirement" that you knew how to play chess. I wonder: Do white people believe blacks don't play chess, since the media only show blacks in physical activities?
- It seems to me that a great many Generation X whites have chosen to act black. Why?
- I am curious about why some African-American women have fingernails that are approximately five inches long or more.
- Why do white people spend so much money trying to get their skin to look black?
- Why is it that some white people feel it necessary to tell black people from time to time that they have a black friend?
- Why do whites momentarily smile at me when I pass them but once past, their facial expression turns plain? Is this the same as African Americans saying "what's up?" by nodding their heads?
- Is it true that most serial killers and child molesters are white, and if so, why?
- Why does it seem that when black people are in groups, they tend

to be very outspoken; i.e., laughing, shouting, dancing, etc.?

-I have noticed that when black women get together and talk, they seem to speak "their own language." My question is: Do black women have a hard time understanding one another?

-It seems to me that black mates generally have better physiques than white males. Is this true, and if so, why?

-It seems to me that the majority of white people are overly stuffy and stiff. Why can't they seem to relax?

HOMEOWNERS' TAX BREAKS \$26 BILLION A YEAR

Homeowners get five different federal tax breaks that the 40 million American families who rent their homes don't. The best known of these allows interest paid on mortgages for principal residences and/or vacation homes to be deducted on the federal income tax return.

The mortgage interest deduction

Supporters of this deduction say it's in the public interest to encourage home ownership yet about two-thirds of the benefits go to families with incomes of \$75,000 or higher—who hardly need encouragement to own property. (Canada, which doesn't have such a deduction, has about the same rate of home ownership as the U.S.)

Although about 63 million US families own their homes, only 27 million—fewer than half—claimed the mortgage interest deduction in 1994. That's probably because it isn't worth it for most nonwealthy taxpayers to itemize their deductions. What's more, the lower your tax bracket, the less the deduction is worth to you. If a family in the 15% bracket pays \$5000 in mortgage interest a year, they save \$750 (\$5000 x 15%) on their taxes. But, if a family in the top tax bracket (39.6%) takes out the same mortgage the deduction is worth \$1980 to them (\$5000 x 39.6%)—more than 2 1/2 times as much.

The National Housing Institute calculates that this deduction cost the Treasury slightly more than \$58 billion in fiscal 1995, and that half that total—\$29 billion—went to people with incomes over \$100,000. (In comparison, the entire 1995 budget for HUD—the Department of Housing and Urban Development was \$26 billion.) According to the Progressive Policy Institute (PPI) only about 5% of home mortgages are over \$300,000. By capping the deduction there—with an adjustment for areas with higher-than-average housing costs—we'd save an estimated \$4.1 billion a year. Leaving off that adjustment for high-cost areas, a \$300,000 cap would save us \$6.7 billion a year (according to the Congressional Black Caucus).

Capping the deduction at \$250,000—as proposed by former Senator Bob Packwood—would save \$7 billion a year and would only affect 1.2 million taxpayers (which means the, \$300,000 cap would affect even fewer people).

...Homeowners can also deduct state and local property taxes on their federal income tax returns. According to the White House, this deprives the Treasury of \$16 billion a year. Finally, homeowners can deduct the interest paid on home equity loans (which sit on top of the basic mortgage). Let's say you have a mountain of credit-card debt. You take out a home equity loan and use the money to pay off the credit cards. Suddenly your interest payments, which weren't deductible, are. Phasing this deduction out would save another \$2.3 billion a year.

From TAKE THE RICH OFF WELFARE

- Common Courage Press

Rattlesnake#1-page 37

PITY THE POOR LANDLORD WE "SUBSIDIZE THEM." -TS

This cut-paste diatribe is not a rant against anyone that owns their own home. I don't feel it makes any immediate sense to attack everyone that owns property. The obvious fact is that the filthy rich and the organized (majority of) landlords are using every means to screw workers. Within the confines of this wholesale forced move out, there are a few 'good' landlords. We all know some. But the political climate of this country and the controlling administration of this city, dictate that housing is a fast sell, quick profit investment. NOT a right, even if you have paid half your monthly wages for years. In such a small city, it is easy to find the real pigs. Pick your targets, they make themselves obvious,

Anti-prop N (1) property owners showed up at a city meeting and Christopher Cook of the SFBG interviewed a few. Here it is from him (11/15/00 SFBay Guardian)

—"It gets uglier. I spoke for a while with Ira Victor, a very concerned man who, like others there, simply wants to own a small chunk of the world. Wielding a sign reading 'Prop N is homophobic,' Victor was furious that N would restrict his buying options. But when I asked what should happen to those who get evicted to clear the path for him, he responded 'those people who would be evicted for a tenancy in common can go buy an apartment... why doesn't the Tenants' Union tell tenants how easy it is to own their own home?'"

So I asked Victor, what about all those people sweating it out at \$10,000 to \$20,000 a year, people who don't make the \$40,000 that (according to Victor) qualifies you for homeownership assistance for the city? Here's where it got revealing.

"If some small percentage don't fit into the bell curve," he responded, "do we want to hold everybody else responsible for their mistakes, because of few people who are irresponsible?" Heated up, he went on: "Are some people going to have to be responsible enough to keep a job? Yes."

Finally I understand: "irresponsible" people, and their thrifty \$15,000-a-year wages, are causing our housing crisis, killing the American dream. They and their advocates at the Tenants Union—not landlords and real estate speculators—are the source of skyrocketing home prices and rents. If they would only get out the way, the rest of "us" could realize "our" dream.

Anti-N activist Cindy Arnold...put it bluntly. "If you are making \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year, you should be in public housing," she said. "Why should you shove people making \$1,000 a month on to landlords and make them bear the brunt?"—

—Christopher ends his article with "The city better get ready to pick up the pieces and begin treating housing as a basic right, not a privilege."

Comments: Interesting that Victor is using the tired old 'homophobic' tag...meaning that somehow rich gay couples are more important than non-rich gays and straights...and that he uses the term bell curve—

a racist track that tried to prove blacks have a lower IQ at birth. Christopher, the SFBG writer, seems like a friend to us all, but he should have mentioned that the wages he is citing are the norm for 1/2 of the ENTIRE population of the USA. That these people are basically mouthing fascist constructs—the poor can work here, but not live here, is a cleansing of their fairy tale city. It's a forced removal by the power of profit. Class War top down.

And rich kid clueless Cindy Arnold doesn't realize that people CANNOT get into public housing, there is not enough, and if her wish was supported by gov't funding, a joke in itself, that the government would actually house workers at the income she cites, fully over 1/3 of the population would then have to be provided with public housing!!!! When in your lifetime have you ever heard of property owners supporting gov't subsidized housing? They won't. Affordable housing, creating a reasonable vacancy rate would lower rents. Landlords don't want that. Are you befuddled by how out of touch the rich are? They have no concept of their own wealth. They have no humility whatsoever! Put the pressure on, put fear back into them...I would like to organize in fact, a mass solemn march of 5,000 or so workers to these people's houses. For a mass PISSING on their doorstep. Or at the least, buckets of blood or a dumbstruck of human fecal matter...as a prize from the Willie Brown Social Club...But maybe we should continue to write letters to the editor and our congresspeople!!

I asked a few questions to Mary Gail S., a local professor that has spent over 15 years studying housing in the US. I asked as 'Tina', the befuddled liberal (There Is No Alternative) to get a rise out of her. The answers are cogent...

Tina: Don't you think that it would be better for tenants to accept market rate rents so that more housing would be built? Hasn't the demand always dictated the supply?

MG: You've got a far too simplistic idea of how supply and demand works. Housing markets do not work like those for potato chips or tennis shoes, because housing is a very different product. Housing is expensive — the single largest purchase, by far, that most people will ever make. Housing is immobile — it cannot be moved from a low demand location to a high one, for example. Housing is durable — a house will last for decades. Housing is complex — the process of building a house, from design to financing to permitting to construction, can take years. These factors make housing markets different from markets for any other good. Housing supply does not respond quickly to demand, or necessarily at all, and housing prices also respond more slowly and less flexibly. For example, in general a 10% vacancy rate in rental housing is needed before competition between landlords starts to hold down rents. Besides, the fact of the matter is that poor and working class people have no demand, and thus no effect on supply. Demand is not need, or desire. You may want a place to live, you may need a place to live, but unless you can pay for it, you have no effective demand. And in the US today, it is simply impossible to profitably build market-rate housing that low-income people can afford: land, labor, and material costs and building code standards place the cheapest possible housing out of reach for the working class in most places and for the poor everywhere. Supply will (slowly and imperfectly) respond to demand, but not to need. So in most cities, any additional sup-

ply would be far too expensive for those who need housing. But what if you could somehow force the market to build lots more housing despite the lack of demand by lower income people? Sure — but even if you built enough to jack up the vacancy rate and lower rents, the cost of providing housing means you can only lower them so far. What you'll get, eventually, is cheaper rents for the better off, and still no affordable housing for most of the people who were shut out of the market already. So the market, left to its own devices, simply cannot respond to our housing problems. This may be shock to you, Tina, but markets are not successful and efficient at everything. Housing, treated as a commodity, fails a large proportion of society. The only true solution would be to decommodify housing — take it out of the market entirely, provide it socially. But within the options available under the system we do live in, the only way out of this is to subsidize housing or to regulate prices through effective rent control.

Tina: I was in Italy and saw very few homeless people. Though I heard it is a poorer country than Germany and the USA. Do they hide them?

MG: If that were the case, every mayor in the US would be in Italy taking lessons on how to get those pesky homeless out of sight. But rich or less rich, no European country has a homelessness problem even remotely comparable to ours. European poverty rates are 1/2 to 1/3 of the rate in the US, thanks to government policies that maintain at least something of social safety net (though that is changing as they turn to Clinton-Blairite "Third Way" politics). That explains to some extent why homeless people are seen less across the Atlantic. But it's not the whole reason. We've always had poor people in the US — and 50 years ago, the proportion of people in poverty was twice as high as today. But mass homelessness is a new problem, dating back only to the 80s. So why does poverty lead to homelessness now, when it didn't before? Because housing is much more expensive relative to people's incomes, due to rising standards for housing (shacks are illegal now) and the growing polarization in income due to globalization. The same factors are true in Europe, but the result is different. European countries have much more extensive "social housing" sectors — it varies, but in general you will find government-built housing for the poor, the working class, and the middle class as well. Europeans recognize that the market cannot meet housing needs — and they view housing as a human right (only the US, among developed countries, refused to sign on to the UN Habitat II declaration to that effect). In some countries the vast majority of people live in subsidized housing — people aren't left to depend on a market that leaves them out in the cold.

Tina: Wouldn't it be better, and doesn't capitalism in the USA prove this, to put all housing projects, including for the homeless, in private hands? Isn't government so inefficient and corrupt that it can't handle meeting our needs? (4)

MG: Public housing in the US has an unfairly bad reputation. There's lots of good public housing — you just don't see it, because if it doesn't look like a "project," you assume it's private. Of course, there's also lots of bad public housing, that damages people and neighborhoods. The government has plenty of failures in providing housing, but it also has successes. The problem is that the private sector also has lots of failures. Most of the worst inefficiency and outright fraud and corruption that has plagued government housing programs has occurred when subsidized housing was privately owned: government money given to private landlords, who took their profit (and then some) and left tenants in substandard housing. Given the track record, I'd take the govern-

ment over the private sector any time. But the best subsidized affordable housing out there right now is developed by nonprofits, many of them community-based. The nonprofits use government money, of course, but they have used their subsidies to build good, permanently affordable housing that improves neighborhoods. They were the first to realize that subsidized housing could work, if you built decent places that didn't scream "project," that didn't stigmatize residents, that fit into their neighborhoods and that were well run. There's no contest — community-based nonprofits beat the government and the for-profit private sector when it comes to getting people housed.

Tina: FDR and the new deal and the programs up to the 60's really increased poverty and housing problems didn't it? It created a dependency problem and an underclass that expected a free ride so they did not have to work. None of the people in subsidized/welfare housing ever work or ever will. Isn't it good to force them to enter the real world?

MG: The New Deal gave us unemployment and disability insurance, welfare and social security. The War on Poverty in the 60s expanded these and gave us Medicare and Medicaid too. You want to do without that? The people who claim the War on Poverty was a failure, and that the New Deal is bankrupt, need to check their facts. Old people used to have the highest poverty rate of all age groups; social security changed that. Now it's kids, the age group where the safety net is weakest. Overall, the poverty rate has dropped from around 23% in 1960, just before the War on Poverty, to 12% today. (3) There is no question that the ways some of our social welfare programs are designed encourage dependency: they're paternalistic and can actually prevent people from taking the actions that would help them move up. But does that mean that we should throw out the whole idea that a society has an obligation to support its most vulnerable members, and those who fall on hard times? Do we really want to return to a time when if you were orphaned, or disabled, or too old to work, you had to depend on your relatives — and if they couldn't or wouldn't help, you were simply out of luck? Read some history — or Dickens — and then tell me social welfare programs cause more harm than good. Besides, why is it only the poor that are thought to be morally damaged by government handouts? If getting a subsidy discourages initiative and destroys personal responsibility, we'd better stop letting the middle class deduct their mortgage interest, and stop giving cheap loans to college students. It's also wrong to link social welfare programs to our growing underclass. We have been cutting our social safety net since the Nixon administration, and the most extreme cuts came under Reagan in the 80s — the very era when "underclass" poverty neighborhoods became a major issue. If welfare caused these problems, the opposite would have been true. Housing is a similar case to poverty. (And by the way, close half of all families with children in public housing have a job as their primary income source — more than rely on welfare (!!!)). HUD's budget was 80% smaller when Reagan left office than when he entered it. Yet his administration was also the time when we went from a few "bums" and "bag ladies" on skid row to homeless people everywhere. Cutting housing funding did not solve our housing problem.

And given that the market simply cannot supply housing for lower-income people, it's silly and evil to argue that ending all subsidies for housing would help.

Thanks Mary Gail! And now just to show how far this reasoning of renters being a parasite on the landlords' back has gone I hunted and grabbed some letters to the Chronicle and Examiner from 96 to '00. They have organizations to protect their right to screw you, and it is apparent since certain terms/ideas keep popping up, that they have spent considerable time together at meetings in order to better push every worker out of the city. I really wanted to refrain from commenting on every letter...but it was unavoidable. Well...you understand....

11/97 SF Chronicle ".....rent control on small, owner-occupied buildings in 1994, which gutted 90 percent of small landlords' rights, and the recent passage of legislation prohibiting landlords from moving into their own buildings, **landlords** are left with virtually **no rights**. That is, except the right to pay the mortgage, property taxes and the ever-increasing (unlike the rent) cost of maintaining the property. So thanks again to the above mentioned. Now, everyone can own property in San Francisco without any of those nasty drawbacks (except the landlord). All you have to do is live in it and pay a below market rent. **R. CHARPENTIER**

—I'll go off these first few here with facts. There is NO legislation keeping landlords from moving in to their own houses. There was a temporary moratorium. The city does not follow up on owner-move-in evictions to see if owners are actually living there. It is completely legal for any landlord to evict us if they 'say' they are moving in. And of course, a cursory investigation by the SFBG and other community people frequently find that the houses/units are NOT occupied by owners. It's a scam to evict people. All us tenants know that. Also, an owner has the legal way of taking a property off the market called the Ellis Act. They can evict all the tenants and then only a year later, charge whatever the fuck they want with the units. The city doesn't check back later on them, in move-ins. Only us tenants do. And lawyers are very expensive. Thousands of people have been evicted under the Ellis act and thousands more under the owner-move-in law. The ONLY law that benefits tenants is the rent-control law. It is enforced and somewhat easy for us to get a hearing on. Any owner-move-in eviction takes up to a year to get resolved IF we contest it. And Ellis Act eviction is decided on the side of the landlords though in a few cases tenants get paid off to move after the decision, but not housing returned. In most cases, tenants can't afford a lawyer. The courts are weighed so heavily to the landlords that the above letter/rant is psychotic greed. Acquisition of real estate is the first thing every American bent on wealth thinks of. Rich people do not abandon such a lucrative market. How are these people, how malicious can they be, to think they are the losers in a property market that increases their wealth by the very act of sitting on their ass? The economics: If there had been no boom in the city, would we hear this clamoring, this horrible whining din from the rich? Why are they so whiney about 'market rates'? Cuz they're fucking greedy.

We as tenants have paid off their mortgages for years, effectively bought their property for THEM with our wages, but once the market says they can make even more, we are the 'parasites'. It is really unimaginable to me why a landlord would call in the militia (the courts, the politicians..etc) on tenants that pay them thousands OVER their monthly mortgage payments and their taxes. They are the people that are subsidized. Mortgage interest can be deducted from income tax. Home improvements can be deducted. Liability insurance can be deducted. Prop 13 kept California taxes below the national average, even though California homes have increased in value 20 to 40 percent above the national average. Another 'subsidy', that is, reduction in taxes....for them!

They are sitting on houses that have increased in value 100% in just 30 years, 40% in just ten. Property owners are getting filthy rich in the 1990's and calling us, those who have paid their goddamn mortgage on the property, a hindrance to increased wealth. Well, yes, such is America, but I would like to call in some voices of anger. It is a fact, that a three-floor house even under rent control will make at least a two thousand-dollar profit a month for a landlord. That's \$24 thousand a year at a very low-ball estimate. For no work. We work. They whine. Big fucking problem here...that we need to make landlords know is very very wrong. It is a vacuum, this discussion. We must clear the air.

"Rent control decreases the freedom of people to move about and decreases the free-market incentive to maintain property and develop new housing on existing residential sites. Rent control arbitrarily **subsidizes** many citizens, devalues properties, diminishes the tax base and penalizes progress. As the availability of housing becomes increasingly skewed, as housing costs drive out **productive citizens**, San Francisco will reach a critical point. At that point rent control will be revealed as a widely damaging policy overall, and will be set aside as it has been in other cities. Meanwhile, all levels of citizens are sacrificing quality, fairness, equitability, free-market incentives and residential predictability. It inequitable allocation of progressively destructive rent **franchises for tenants**..... **Michael Harris**

—Michael complains about 'devalued' properties in a market that has made his property increase by value 40% in just ten years? Oh you poor poor rich little man! And the only thing that 'decreases' our freedom to move is that affordable housing can't be found! And subsidies? Let's talk again about the tax deduction for property owners on mortgages. It adds to billions of dollars a year.

"That in a city with a drastic housing shortage, hundreds of single people live alone affordably, paying only a few hundred bucks a month to hoard two- or three- bedroom rent-controlled units: (**WHAT THE FUCK IS HE TALKING ABOUT?**) that people who live outside San Francisco hold cheap rent-controlled units as second or third homes they rarely if ever visit; (**WHAT THE FUCK IS HE TALKING ABOUT?**) that many professionals with six-figure incomes are having their rents subsidized by landlords whose incomes are less than their tenants; (**HE'S ON CRACK!**) that many landlords are so cowed by the extensive rent laws and penalties that they have pulled units off the market in fear. (**LANDLORDS RUNNING IN FEAR!**) Finally, it will be revealed that rent control is really a payoff to the renters' voting block - but disguised as social program - (**RENT CONTROL. 'DISGUISED' AS A SOCIAL PROGRAM!!**) and that, despite years of successfully spinning the "greedy landlord" story, the greed is really on the other foot. (**"WHAT THE FUCK IS HE TALKING ABOUT?"**)—Peter Hendrix Redwood City

'I can conduct the mayor's suggested "study" on rent control without going any further than my own experience ("Brown supports a review of Rattlesnake #1- page 40

rent control," Nov. 11). I personally know of 11 living units in four buildings owned by friends and acquaintances - one four-unit, a three-unit and two two-unit buildings - that have a grand total of one tenant, an 80-year-old woman who has lived in the same building for 20 years. All the other units except three occupied by owners are vacant because the owners don't want to deal with the myriad absurd rules purporting to protect renters. All the vacant units have become "storage," "home offices" or just plain vacant. It cost one landlord \$5,000 to get rid of a destructive non-rent paying-tenant and he never re-rented the unit. These owners are definitely not Ellis-ing their buildings [using the Ellis Act to evict tenants]. All but one are long-term owners who plan on staying in The City. They have small mortgages or can cover the cost without tenants. No wonder The City has such a housing crisis. The crisis will continue until small rental properties are returned to their owners to manage. The market will then weed out the bad landlords. The alternative of expropriating all buildings of four or fewer units and have the rent board manage them will not solve the problem." -Edward K. Lortz San Francisco (ugh)

"I have been to meetings myself where tenants claim they cannot afford a carton of milk if the rent is raised a couple of dollars, in contrast to landlords who all drive BMWs, according to the tenants. The reality is that a large portion of renters are quite well off. I know quite a few who live in huge apartments occupying a whole floor with three bedrooms and three baths that could accommodate a big family. I have heard them brag about the cheap rent, subsidized by the landlord, while they go on cruises and take trips to Europe. They are not about to move. Blaming the landlords for the disastrous housing situation in San Francisco is barking up a wrong tree. The landlords are not responsible for the shortage of housing - it is strictly due to 20 years of rent control and moratoriums on new buildings, (NONE-LIE) and mismanagement by politicians who worry more about The City. (**NOT TRUE-BUT IMAGINE POLITICIANS THAT WORRY ABOUT THE CITY WHOSE CITIZENS ELECT THEM! OH!**) Renters are now locked in. They don't move out and there is no place for others to move in. (**SO SOMEONE HAS TO MOVE OUT OF THE CITY FOR OTHERS TO MOVE IN?**) Upward mobility is not possible any more. To think that more and more dictatorial infringements on property rights will create more housing is just economic ignorance. The opposite is happening. Maurice Kanbar (owner of eight-story 2100 Jackson St. being emptied of renters) obviously doesn't want to be jerked around by The City any longer and prefers to get out of the rental business, and at least so far he has the constitutional right to do so. It is about the only right he has left. Also, the ridiculous yearly increase of 1.7 percent permitted by the rent control board does not make sense. It has only encouraged many small property owners to keep units off the market, (**USUAL LIE**) and thus have control of their property and not give control to tenants. Police, firefighters and Muni drivers are getting increases in the double digits over two years. Try to offer 1.7 percent to these people and hear them scream. Property owners have to hire the highest-paid labor in the country for repairs and maintenance, (**BAH BAH, ACK ACK, IT IS PROPERTY OWNERS WHO ARE PICKING UP ALL THE ILLEGALS ON CHAVEZ TO DO REPAIR WORK FOR FUCKING \$8 AN HOUR! THEY DON'T USE UNION LABOR! YOU WANT SOME PICTURES PETER BUTTNOSE FACE?**) and with the low return on rent-controlled properties it is no wonder many sell out. There are about 45,000 two-unit houses in The City, most of them with one unit occupied by the owner and the other under rent control. The owners get very little return on their property, so they sell at sky-high prices due to the shortage of

housing. (**THE OWNERS GET VERY LITTLE RETURN, !Thousands a month in rent for doing nothing** OH ..) More and more rentals are disappearing and the drain will continue. The City has dug its own grave and the housing disaster will be with us for decades. No use whining. T.K. Olsen San Francisco *Hey TK give you a clue, we ain't whining, we are demanding..and the demands will get louder, and louder, and louder...*

"For two decades, I neither evicted nor raised the rent on numerous occupants of my one rental unit. In fact, I kept rents low to keep good tenants. Now, leases with locked-in low rents will seriously depress the value of my house, so I must raise rent at every opportunity or leave the unit vacant. If anybody wonders why rents are so high here, look no further than our oppressive rent control laws.

PETER GORMAN

"Richard Kallet (letter to the editor, June 19) complains that he has to pay 50 to 60 percent of his paycheck in rent to landlords whose "arrogance and greed" are "truly pornographic." Has he ever looked into the accounting of property ownership?

Has he assured himself that the building he lives in actually has a positive cash flow? Does he realize that the kind of capital investment now in his rental unit could be invested elsewhere at a much higher return, with no need for daily clean-up and property maintenance? (**DAILY CLEAN UP BY LANDLORDS? YOU'RE KIDDING! MAINTENANCE? YOU'RE KIDDING! BUILDINGS IN SF NOT HAVING POSITIVE CASH FLOW? YOU THINK WE ARE THAT STUPID?**)

I suggest that Kallet look into becoming a co-owner of a tenancy-in-common while it is still a possibility. Stop being a victim, grow up and, if it is such a good deal being a landlord, try to be one yourself. (**CAN YOU LOAN US \$200,000? Can we try being a landlord please!!**)

-Kira Eldemir [letter She is referring to: "I am a solid middle-class professional who has lived in The City for 19 years. Without rent control, I would have been forced from The City by the mid 1990s. I resent that landlords feel they have the right to 50 percent to 60 percent of my net paycheck. The arrogance and greed of these people is truly pornographic! Richard Kallet]

"Rent control is unfair, since it takes away owners' rights without compensation. Those who are subsidized always feel aggrieved when their unearned subsidy (**we work, give you the money-whose money is unearned?**) ends. On the other hand, with 65 percent of voters tenants, who needs reason or fairness? Eliminating tenancies-in-common helps lock in that 65 percent."

Roger Borgen

There are many people who would move if they had to pay market rates. Because they stay, we have a much greater housing shortage than we would if they weren't "protected" against rent increases. And to think that this sham has been perpetrated in the name of the needy!

Joe Capko (**MOVE WHERE? THE LOGIC!?!**)

"Newly released census data tells us that despite the construction of 10,000 new housing units in San Francisco in the last decade, the city's rental stock decreased by 7,500. Why? **(BECAUSE RICH PEOPLE WERE BUYING HOUSES AND KICKING OUT THE TENANTS)** Ask any landlord. Since San Franciscans, led by rent-control activists, voted to reduce rent increases in 1993 to an average of less than 2 percent per year, fed-up landlords have been quitting the business in droves. **(BULLSHIT)** When they sell, it's usually wealthy owner-occupiers who buy, thus reducing rental stock. This decrease in rental stock has not only made finding an apartment a grueling ordeal, it has pushed market rents sky high. Meanwhile, rent-controlled rents have increased by only 22 percent over the last 10 years, while family income, according to the census data, increased by 66 percent. **(BULLSHIT--INCOMES FOR THE BOTTOM 60% HAS NOT INCREASED SINCE THE 70'S)** It's not unusual these days to find renters with hefty salaries who pay a fraction of market rent for their apartments. And once a renter, rich or poor, pays below-market rents, they hold onto their places like a drug user to his addiction. This has dropped the turnover rate to an all-time low, and driven market rents even higher. It's time we stopped legislating landlords into extinction and developed reasonable housing policies that encourage ownership of rental housing that the city so desperately needs. We need to raise the annual allowable rent increase so those rental property owners earn a fair return on their investment and so that we eliminate rent control for renters with high incomes. If we don't take these measures, our rental stock will continue to decrease and market rents will continue to spiral out of control."

DANIEL BACON

"I am hoping the housing study recently approved by the Board of Supervisors will shed some light on how many rental units are being withheld from the market because of rent control, or how many developers have decided to build condominiums or go to commercial development rather than deal with the potential problems of rent or eviction control, because of the anti-housing/pro-rent control attitudes pervasive in San Francisco. I can think of one developer right now who recently chose to build storage units rather than housing."

Kim Stryker Co-Chair Small Property Owners (KIM-The only 'anti-housing attitudes' come from rich property speculators!!)

AND HERE ARE THREE LETTERS TO THE CORPORATE PAPERS THAT SPOKE SOME SENSE:

Editor — I have been a renter in San Francisco for 29 years and well recall the circumstances that led to the introduction of rent control, which did not arise in a vacuum but out of an intolerable housing situation with recurrent gouging by avaricious landlords and no tenant protections in place. In 1972, I was given abrupt notice that my rent would be increased by \$200 (which would equal about \$400 now) a month shortly after the birth of my daughter, allegedly for the "extra wear and tear" which would result from housing a child. I was forced to move into a roommate situation.

Several years later, my roommates and I received 30 days' notice from our landlord that our rent would more than double.

Unfortunately, these were not isolated incidents. Rest assured that were it not for rent control, studios in the Tenderloin would have been renting for \$1,000 a month by the mid-1980s.

I find it interesting that the same landlords who wail about how much they're losing on "below market" rents are quiet about the underlying wealth they are accumulating from the rapid acceleration of real estate values in the city. I have several friends who own buildings in the city and they are quite smug about what great investments their rental properties have turned out to be despite the occasional problem tenant. Landlords are well aware of the tax write-offs and steady capital appreciation that accrue from property ownership, all subsidized by the rent they receive from tenants.

K. C. ELLIS

Brett Gladstone, the developers' lawyer who wrote the pro-"live-work" piece in the July 13 Chronicle, promulgates the same misunderstanding of economics that real estate speculators have been repeating for years. He writes, "Anybody who thinks that live-work units . . . are not a part of the answer to the Bay Area housing crisis . . . does not believe in the law of supply and demand." If Mr. Gladstone had stayed awake during his economics courses, he would have learned that certain classes of goods, services and products are subject to inelastic demand — that is, they are requirements for life, like food, necessary medicines and, yes, housing. As such, the law of supply and demand applies differently to these commodities. A landlord can charge whatever he pleases, because land (and therefore housing) is both necessary and inherently finite. It will not take long for a desperate tenant to offer what is being demanded.

Supply in this instance affects price only in cases of drastic oversupply, as happens during the exodus from an area following a catastrophe. Relying on the free market to set the prices of inelastic goods leads to profiteering; this is why price controls are enacted in times of scarcity (for example, during wartime). It is intellectually dishonest at best, and propagandistic in any case, for Mr. Gladstone to write of housing as though it were equivalent to VCRs or snack foods. The reality, as always, is much more complicated. JF, SF

The reasoning always leaves me open-mouthed; uhh-duhh, etc. Rent control causes people to stay in their places because the "low rent", viciously labeled "subsidy," permits tenants to stay rather than to move. So, if they were forced out, wouldn't they just be trying to rent some place else - here, or in Kentucky, or wherever? Then, there'd still be just as many rental units, but these once low-priced ones would now be high-priced. Oh, I see. Then, a "better class" of tenant would be able to move in and pay the landlord more. And that's a less tight rental market? I'm missing something. Norma J.F. Harrison Berkeley

(notes to LANDLORDS)

1) Proposition N on the ballot in San Francisco County in Nov 2000, meant to restrict 'tenancies-in-common', a law that enabled two or three people, at least one being a tenant, to buy a property. It sounds reasonable, except that only rich people can buy a house now in SF. So it had become another loophole to evict all tenants and take more rental housing off the market. Also, there are many cases where landlords were moving in a tenant only in order to become a partner with them, creating a tenancy-in-common to evict workers. It in now way, restricted the ability of the rich to buy outright.

2) wrong Victor land-owner, bullshit, try \$100,000 a year just to get a bank to look at you. SF the city does offer some assistance but that does not preclude the fact that loans come from banks. NO ONE making \$40,000 a year here can buy a home by themselves.

3) MG is taking US Census Bureau poverty rates, which I dispute, since they don't bring in price of healthcare, transportation, and housing, in totality, in US poverty rates. It calculates poverty income as a percentage of median

income... a construct outdated since it was instituted in the 50's...and add the fact that there are over 2 million homeless people in the US, which we saw little of from the 40's up to the late 70's so the numbers are screwy. Poverty and unemployment rates also don't take in the 2 million people in prison. Poverty is much higher and at a level not seen since the depression I would argue. The minimum wage is 30% lower than it was in the 60's as one example of the problem using median income, if you are going to compare to the past. Though I could not support this with simple US Census Bureau graphs. That 'real wage' calculation is supposedly taken into account too, but I find it hard to believe that someone making \$17,000 raising a family of four is not at poverty level here-it tops at \$16,000 with four kids! Also, infant mortality rate is highest now since the early 50's. A very real barometer of available health care and services. Still, I agree, that the programs that Reagan, and then Clinton cut, had before reduced poverty to a very large degree. The Social Security tax alone, though extremely regressive since people making over \$66,000 cap off, and we pay the bulk of it compared to our 'disposable wages', is responsible for providing millions to otherwise poor old people, some food and rent. AFDC should never have been cut, but raised instead. A feminist issue that mainstream 'feminists' ignored.

4) Actually if you look at the gov't administration process, such as dispersing SS checks, the administrative costs are below the private sector. For example, SS administrative costs are only 5% of the money collected. Canada spends only about 8% administrative costs on its health care for all citizens, while corporate HMO's typically waste about 20% of your dues to cover paper shuffling etc. Not to mention the fact that corporations are based on for-profit, not for service and are of a structure of basically fascist composition, while our democracy still has some citizen input.

HAVANA BE YOUR VALENTINE

From a private verbal message that on February 12, 1964, Fidel Castro asked Lisa Howard, an ABC News reporter, to convey to President Lyndon Johnson. The United States and Cuba had been engaged in talks intended to normalize relations since September 1963, and were building momentum at the time of John F. Kennedy's death. A transcript of the message was obtained by Peter Kornbluh, who directs the Cuba Documentation Project at the National Security Archive in Washington, D.C.

"1. Please tell President Johnson that I earnestly desire his election to the presidency in November-though that appears assured. But if there is anything I can do to add to his majority (aside from retiring from politics), I shall be happy to cooperate. Seriously, I observe how the Republicans use Cuba as a weapon against the Democrats. So tell President Johnson to let me know what I can do. Naturally, I know that my offer of assistance would be of immense value to the Republicans-so this would remain our secret. But if the President wishes to pass word to me he can do so through you [Lisa Howard].

2. If the President feels it necessary during the campaign to make bellicose statements about Cuba or even to take some hostile action-if he will inform me, unofficially, that a specific action is required because of domestic political considerations, I shall understand and not take any serious retaliatory action.

3. Tell the President that I seriously hope that Cuba and the United States can sit down in an atmosphere of good will and of respect and negotiate our differences. I believe that there are no areas of contention between us that cannot be settled within a climate of mutual understanding. First, of course, it is necessary to discuss our differences. I now believe that this hostility between Cuba and the United States is both unnatural and unnecessary-and it can be eliminated.

4. Tell the President he should not interpret my conciliatory attitude as a sign of weakness. That would be a serious miscalculation. We are not weak-the Revolution is strong, very strong. Nothing, absolutely nothing, that the United States can do will

destroy the Revolution. Yes, we are strong. And it is from this position of strength that we wish to resolve our differences with the United States and to live in peace with all the nations of the world.

5. Tell the President I fully realize the need for absolute secrecy, if he should decide to continue the Kennedy approach. I revealed nothing at nothing at that time. I have revealed nothing since. I would reveal nothing now."

WHAT IS THIS, CANADA?

From the transcript of a discussion between representatives of the Motion Picture Association of America ratings board and Paramount Pictures concerning the rating of the movie South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut. The transcript, which was provided by South Park co-creator Matt Stone, was printed in Digital Coast Reporter last summer.

JILL (MPAA): The board feels it is NC- 17 at this stage, with some of the- You're not wanting to release it with anything but an R, are you?

PETER (PARAMOUNT): It's going to be an R. Right.

JERRY (MPAA): Among other things was the reference to "fisting."

JILL: Another thing, what is going on in the Ping-Pong area with Winona Ryder?

JERRY: I think the balls are being shot out by an unseen vagina.

PETER: The Ping-Pong balls are supposed to look like they're coming from her vagina, but she stands up and you know that they're not. She's holding a paddle in her hand, and you'll see that she's hitting them with the paddle.

JILL: There's a whole thing about being fucked by God.

PETER: Are you referring to the line, "God has fucked me in the ass?"

JILL: Yes.

PETER: Is that the only one? Or is it also, "God is the biggest bitch of them all?" Or is that okay?

JILL- I would say it's the "God fucking me in the ass" that's the problem. "Fucking me up the ass" is much more graphic. "Bitch of all" is just irreverent. I don't see how that could end up being NC- 17.

JERRY: The scene goes on for a long time.

PETER: It does, but once he says it, that's it.

JILL: He says it two or three times.

PETER: No, he doesn't. What he says is, "If I had a nickel for every time God has fucked me in the ass, I would buy tropical cream for my ass."

JILL: Right after that it is, "I will make love so deep you'll feel pressure on your lungs."

PETER: I thought we were talking about Mole and what he was saying about God.

JERRY: I believe that the comment was in the song that the chef was singing.

JERRY: The language is the problem, not the visual. I'll tell you something visual that was mentioned by some people, the scene where Saddam and Satan are in bed together and Saddam keeps flashing his penis at the devil before their sex scene.

JILL: There are some people who don't see how it could get to R, but a majority think that if the more sexually direct dialogue was addressed that it would be R. I did the count in my head and can see it getting there easily with some of the things addressed.

MESSENGER WAR, MESSENGER PEACE???

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This has not been a terribly relaxing year for the managers and owners of San Francisco same-day courier companies. Nor has it been without occasional and even recurring delivery service breakdowns for downtown business. Yes, it's been a great year for San Francisco messengers! It has shown that messengers have power - we just gotta take it.

TURMOIL 2000

2000 has seen more strikes than ever before, and it's not over yet. On January 12, DMS (now CitySprint) messengers got things off with a bang by hitting management with a five day wildcat strike. This action shut down the company's entire walker and biker boards and crippled the intown

driver board. Ultra Ex (now Speedway) messengers, affiliated with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), have conducted pickets in front of company offices and repeated work stoppages that culminated in a 3-day strike in April. Messengers at Professional Messenger, also with the ILWU, have similarly pressured their bosses with pickets and walk-offs.

DMS/CitySprint intown messengers — walkers, bikers and drivers — have gotten a big pay-raise because of the January strike and subsequent turmoil. Downtown bike and foot work pays 50-70% more than prior to the strike. Also, DMS/CS messengers demanded and won winter pay equaling about \$170 per month from December through March. And, after proving that management was taking

money from new hires, DMS/CS was forced to cough up retroactive pay to numerous messengers. (see "Other Important Wins" box in the "The Big Raise" article). Speedway and the ILWU signed a contract in May 2000, which among other things, increases payouts to bikers from 38% to 40.5% of the client bill, grants legal holiday and vacation pay, an improved health plan, and a small raise to hourly walkers.

In August 2000, Professional and the ILWU ratified a contract that abolishes daily fees charged to drivers using company vehicles, forces management to absorb costs of certain discounted clients, provides significant equipment compensation, modestly increases payouts, grants a better benefits package, and more. These gains at three of the largest courier firms in San Francisco raise the standards for all messengers in this highly competitive, cutthroat industry. Some courier company owners have seized the opportunity to raise rates and passed on a raise to their workforce. The hope is that a few bones here and there will buy some loyalty and ward off organizing and collective action.

It is important that management's dream of a tranquil Fall and Winter 2000 not come true. The gains that have been won can be built upon — after all, we've only demonstrated a fraction of our potential power. Our power comes from the fact that not only the courier companies depend on us for their incomes, but that capitalist business requires our

services.

SERVING UP CAPITAL

San Francisco is a premier hub of international commerce and a base to many of the biggest and most powerful corporations on earth. The great bulk of the work we perform is directly or indirectly in the service of the legal, financial, administrative and commercial needs of corporate capitalism. Chevron, The Gap, B of A, Bechtel, Charles Schwab, etc. need and expect a pliant work-force to help them function and communicate as they wish. And without hundreds and hundreds of couriers set in motion all-year-round the machine could not function.

Courier companies turn a profit — or attempt to — by managing a messenger workforce that is placed at the disposal of downtown business. The system of contracting delivery work through courier firms provides downtown with a cheap and flexible means of getting its shit from here to there. With so many options, the big clients are able to leverage discounts and demand preferential treatment, while avoiding all overhead costs.

So what we have is a set-up perfectly suited to the needs of business, with the courier owners skimming profit off the top. The absence of standards regulating the industry — except for ridiculously low federal minimums — means that intense competition for clients drives down conditions for all messengers. While it has been shown that real improvements can be extracted from our bosses via actions on a company-by-company basis, our individual victories are vulnerable as long as the rest of the industry remains unchanged. For this reason, organizing and collective action must occur at all the courier firms, moving in the direction of cross-industry activity that demonstrates our power in the face of the office towers and the courier company scammers.

While courier companies come and go, the need for courier labor is a constant. This is our power. The focus shouldn't be simply sealing deals with individual companies, but instead to constitute ourselves as a collective force that the courier owners — whomever they may be — must contend with. The question becomes how to best organize and assert our power to do this.

WITHOUT WARNING, STRIKE!

The wildcat strike at DMS/CS in January and the subsequent walk-offs and concerted pressure, we believe, provides an example of how messengers can quickly extract concessions from our bosses, while laying the basis for larger scale action. Frequently, we're told that organizing is a slow process, and that it's important to be patient. But, impatience isn't necessarily a bad thing.

At the time of the strike, the ILWU was officially attempting to organize DMS. However, the snail's pace of the union recognition process was neither mobilizing nor harnessing the energies of DMS messengers. In April '99 the ILWU had union cards signed by most of the bikers and some of the drivers. However, the union drive never went past this stage. By the summer, many if not most of those who had signed cards had quit.

The lesson derived from this experience was that if we want power we have to take it. A nucleus of messengers was formed that began to organize. We got the phone numbers

of our co-workers, threw a party, and organized meetings to discuss demands and strategy. In early December, at a well-attended meeting at a local bar, a pledge to strike in support of agreed upon demands was circulated. Everyone in attendance signed. We were building for something tangible, something people could sink their teeth into. We weren't ceding power to lawyers or the National Labor Relations Board. There was nothing bureaucratic or obscure about what was being proposed. It was going to happen soon, and we were going to do it! Only a month elapsed between the circulation of the pledge to strike and our strike action. In that time we talked with as many fellow employees as possible, shored up support, developed our demands, and prepared to act.

On January 12, 2000, without warning, every DMS/CS walking and bicycle messenger with only one exception - out of more than thirty on the payroll - struck. Many intown and regional drivers participated by slowing down or stopping altogether. All this, combined with creative use of company communications, cut business by 80%. Woohoo!! The vice president of DMS/CS was flown out from the New York headquarters to plead for us to return to work. The strike lasted five days. It wasn't easy, but we stuck together. The support we received from messengers throughout the city was awesome. We demonstrated to DMS/CS management that messengers are a force to be reckoned with. We organized and took action much quicker than most thought possible, and it paid off. We didn't have some secret formula or experience in labor organizing—we had vision and a belief in our power.

Our strike action was explicitly in support of demands on DMS/CS for immediate improvement in our working conditions. We punched real concessions out of management by asserting our power in an unpredictable and rapid way. There were no negotiations; DMS/CS messengers gave up nothing in return. We haven't gotten everything we want or demanded, but we are not bound by a no-strike clause or a contract with stipulations that will constrain us from fighting in the future.

THE UNION

Despite the success of the DMS/CS strike, the ILWU saw our action as a problem because it didn't conform to the union's strategy for improving conditions in the courier industry. While the ILWU deserves credit for attempting to organize an industry as messy as this one, the tensions that develop raise important issues as to how to best unleash our power as messengers. The ILWU's goal is to organize the entire same-day courier industry—starting with the biggest messenger firms. In order to set labor standards for the entire industry, the union seeks a contract that encompasses the entire industry. To win a contract, the union must be officially recognized as the bargaining agent representing the workers' interests. The idea is to negotiate a contract with the employer that codifies modest gains on a variety of issues like compensation, benefits, seniority, vacation pay, etc.. (Note: The one-year contracts at Pro and Speedway contain no-strike clauses.) Once a contract is signed, the union moves on to organize the next company with the hope of pulling more and more of the courier industry under the union umbrella.

The first step in a union drive is getting employees at a given shop to sign union recognition cards. When and if the union is able to get enough cards signed it files for an election with the National Labor Relations Board, arranges that election, and

builds support for a yes vote. (The NLRB "mediates" between unions and companies by enforcing labor laws.) If the workers vote for the union the appeal process begins, with each side contesting ballots and other fun stuff. If the union victory holds, the company and the workers enter into collective bargaining. It is not until this stage that the union workers are mobilized to fight (through strikes and slow downs). Things conclude when and if enough compromises have been made that both sides finally agree to a contract. Because the DMS/CS strike was not a recognized union action, and did not seek a contractual agreement, the ILWU saw it as a barrier to organizing for industry-wide change. We strongly disagree with this assessment.

It's tempting to think that the DMS/CS action could just as well have been a union action, but it would be inaccurate to do so. Unlike Speedway, DMS/CS at the time of the strike didn't have a stable workforce. A large percentage of the messengers at DMS/CS were relatively new and had no idea how long they would stick around. Therefore, many had little interest in enduring the ploddingly slow union recognition process that leads to a contract. In this sense, the DMS/CS workforce - marked by high levels of turnover and transience - was typical of San Francisco messengers. If we had followed standard union procedures there would have been no fuel to act as we did. The DMS/CS strike shows that it is possible for messengers to take action without going through the state-sanctioned union recognition process and make gains without signing a contract. In an attempt to finance the big raise that we won, management increased prices. In turn, courier company owners across the industry have felt emboldened to do the same. In what sense is that a barrier to industry-wide improvements?

ACTION ALL AROUND

The strongest statement we can send the courier company owners and the businesses that contract through them is to SHUT DOWN the entire same-day courier industry and place demands for immediate respect and change. Actions on a company-by-company basis have been effective but they are limited and draw upon the energies of only a fraction of the overall messenger workforce. The impact of isolated strikes is diminished when the targeted company sends its work to other courier firms. Plus, messengers that boldly take action at one company alone, take a hit as they come back to a workplace that has lost clients (like at DMS/CS and Speedway). All this points to the need for more generalized, large-scale activity that cannot be ignored. An industry-wide strike would demonstrate our power and put us in position to determine the work conditions for this industry.

Our concern with the ILWU strategy is that its twin pillars - of union recognition and the no-strike contract - blocks the possibility of industry-wide action, which is the most powerful means for asserting our power as messengers. Strict adherence to the legal-bureaucratic process of obtaining union recognition channels discontent onto terrain that is predictable to our bosses. Too often the pursuit of recognition - because it is so slow and feels outside the control of workers - dampens resolve and causes people to lose

interest in fighting at all. Union campaigns often wither on the vine simply because a large percentage of the workforce tires of waiting and moves on. So how likely is large-scale action if union recognition is seen as a necessary requirement?

Additionally, the no-strike clause contained in union contracts effectively takes union workers out of circulation and grant big assurances to the bosses. With no-strike clauses, workers are legally bound not to strike (although they have the right to honor picket lines), and if they do, the union can be sued for breach of contract. For this reason, in most cases, the union would oppose strikes for fear of the financial losses that would likely result. So we end up with the organization representing the workers telling workers not to assert their power. Although the contracts at Pro and Speedway are hailed as the harbinger of industry-wide change, in the event of industry-wide action, the messengers at the city's two unionized firms would be legally bound not to participate!

The threat of unionization that has come with the ILWU's involvement over the last two years has caused some courier companies to make improvements just to ward off a union drive. And to some extent, the pay-raise at DMS/CS is due to management's fear of exactly that. However, our power as workers is based in our capacity to take collective action on our own terms. If as messengers we are to fight for better conditions and greater power we should do so without constraints designed to keep us in check.

Messengers are especially well positioned now to make amazing things happen by building on the organization and experiences of folks already in the thick of it. Actions at one company can make gains; this has already been proven true. But so long as insanely exploitative conditions exist anywhere, the standards for all messengers are pulled down. That's why organization and action needs to involve workers from multiple companies simultaneously. In order to win industry standards, we need industry-wide action.

Momentum is key to successful movements for change. It is imperative that the Fall and Winter 2000 see even greater levels of activity, organization, and —of course— STRIKES! We believe that the successes of the DMS/CS wildcat action prove that change can be made quickly, and can pave the way for larger, cross-industry action. Those who say that it can't be done, or that change occurs slowly, are only engaging in self-fulfilling prophecy. When we limit what we think is possible, we limit what is possible.

-- By Aaron and Natasha

Larry Harvey one of the founders of Burning Man who now runs the festival "Cultural activities could disappear because they have been siphoned off to mass culture." Then "I'd like to change the fucking world, and I think we've got a good shot at it." and Harvey has plans to entice Silicon Valley millionaires into sponsoring its art and providing for spin-off festivals."

"You got more bottles, cans? Hey, who's the president now? Fifty-five times I asked that today, and everybody looks at me funny. I guess it's a funny question. You know, who the fuck really cares?" —man on the street 12/00

peter simonelli

The Door Slams Behind Them

It's one am on a Wednesday morning and I have six people in here. This is ordinary. The milder, more austere drinkers have wrapped it up and called it a night by eleven, which leaves me with my regular vacuum period. I can play pinball, or pluck a book from the shelves; I can walk to the back and visit the mural of the proverbial Fat Lady Singing on the wall facing the women's bathroom and decide whether I want to close up for the night or not. Since she always seems like a test of endurance, I routinely opt for the latter and then head over to the men's bathroom and have a seat on the steps leading to the back run between properties. Here I can listen to the percussive trickle of the drain water making its way through one point of entry to the bay. Listen closely and it's damn near idyllic.

Outside the cars are scarce, passing under the dull throb of blinking yellows, and those out walking suspect others out walking, glancing at one another as they pass on opposite sides of the street. I'm taking it in with a quick smoke, though 'quick' actually belies the state of the place. The lifers are here—the mechanics and carpenters, the spot-employed and the generally unemployed artists— and they're all invested in a tight game of Three Ball. It's a simple game (an ape could play it), and therefore intense. Each player throws an allotted amount of cash—usually a buck or two— into a pile and the first person whosinks all three balls in the least amount of shots before five wins; if there's a tie the pot rolls over. The funny thing is, I can leave at any point and they wouldn't know it. Funnier still, when I do return, they're all so wrapped up and involved in the game I have to ask a drunk whether he wants another drink or not. This of course upsets the game because the world has suddenly slipped back into place. They only have an hour left so pints are now backed up with shots, and things get lively.

Timba, a large man whose ancestry dates back to the Vikings, begins clapping his hands and growling hysterically. He assumes a lineman's three-point stance and growls some more. He can't contain himself sometimes. He gets a few in him and this former tennis standout starts moving mountains. The energy and gusto are unbelievable: it's never violent, at least in the way of malice, and often takes on the fast and loose persona of the Crazy Uncle. I've been suddenly lifted off the ground and bear-hugged to the friggin moon, only to come back to Earth and find Timba laughing at the top of his lungs and patting me on the back. In Timba's inebriated glee, normal 'hellos' are mundane things for boors and sadsacks. Tonight's not much different. He takes my hand as if to shake it then suddenly lifts me over his shoulder and adroitly slips me, clutch by clutch, to the ground, where I manage to get my hands down before collapsing in a sober heap at his feet.

Laughs all around.

Taking his natural position in the middle of the room, Motley, whom one could call the inspiration of the bunch, starts speaking in exclamation points, taunting all those around the bar in a jocular game of psychological warfare. He makes a beeline for the cue rack and, wielding a nice 20 ounce at the hip, invites all comers: "What's your name, Loser?" It's obvious: he needs the money, whereas the others, by no means well heeled, still have jobs.

Motley's recently been canned from UPS, where he once plied the unprecedented administrative graveyard shift in a company of perhaps millions worldwide. It was a last chance

measure the Big Browns imposed on him in the hopes that he might get his shit together and work, but Motley wasn't having it. Going in to work in a buttndown and tie at 1am is ludicrous, sure, but hang that on a mother who'd just as soon be rippin' a few rails and throwing back pints on an early Wednesday morning and expect him to comply? No deal.

Specs- my staunch regular with the knowing grin of the flaneur- sits idly at her post at the corner of the bar and finishes off her last pint for the night. At midnight I was over by the bookshelf flipping through some pages when she'd parted the doors a little sideways, entering like a one woman crescendo. Her skirt was flapping in the breeze of her pace, her hair was mussed and askew, and her steps, though intent, were mildly toppling things that suggested a finale with top hats and canes. She took her seat and sighed almost triumphantly, and by the time I'd set her beer before her, the others- the Three Ballers-had quickly and loudly descended on the joint after a long close ballgame out at the new park and a few celebratory beers.

Specs decided she liked the action and threw in a buck for herself, then ordered another beer.

As for the other three, there's Brooklyn for starters. A staunch and pugnacious type with the beaten mug of an old prizefighter, he's got a mean weakness for the brown and very well could be the most violent Deadhead on the planet. He can't help it, he says, and though there's a newborn back at the house and the union contract is safe and secure for the next five years, Brooklyn resorts to the primordial tendencies of the slattern drunk. I once saw him go from hugging an old pal to pasting a shot to his forehead in a matter of about 15 minutes. Seems the guy made light of Brooklyn's tendency to talk out of the side of his mouth and said it looked like Brooklyn's words were spoken like a chipmunk who had its mouth full of seeds....

Bang.

Brooklyn knew the score. He apologized to me, then walked out the door into the night, that brutish and nightmare-alley face of his hovering over the bandying play of dancing teddy bears. Tonight's the first time I've seen him since that night, so when he sees me he apologizes again and we have a shot together. He slams his glass on the bar and lets loose with a long burnt sigh. Then he pulls a cassette from his breast pocket.

"Jersey," he says. "'74."

"No, man," I say. "I'm sorry, Brooklyn, but no fuckin' way."

I was testing myself here. If I came off too strong-which I was already in jeopardy of doing- I too faced the possibility of taking one to the forehead. Brooklyn's a large man with violent instincts; where that Grateful Dead shit comes into play I have no idea, though I'm told that his wife works for BGP and he just wears the shirts she brings home because it beats shopping. I asked him about this and he shrugged and chuckled a bit menacingly.

"...The Dead's therapy for me," he said, leaning in suggestively and wavering over the bar. He looked as though he was about to drool.

"I'm sorry Brooklyn, but I can't stand the shit," I said, taking a step back, my arms outspread. This was when the remaining two, Faggiolino and Thor, stepped in. They were tight with Brooklyn, having worked jobs together throughout the past couple of years. They knew his temper best and so went about a quick appeasing process, which entailed their buying him another shot and telling him he had all day tomorrow to listen the Dead at his site: he was the foreman, right? He could listen to whatever he damn well pleased....

Brooklyn relented and tossed back his shot. Faggiolino

coaxed another bill from him for the nextround and things got back to a concentrated nexus of serious-faced men hovering over slicing pool balls and gulping pockets. Faggiolino held up two fingers during the break and I reached into the cooler and brought out a couple of Coronas for him and Thor. After a minute Thor sheepishly made his way back to the bar and asked for a shot of tequila. He, too, had a Viking ancestry, but unlike Timba Thor elicited no celebrated nods toward his legacy. There was nothing in his character that suggested flamboyance or drama. He went about a quiet mode of conduct, often setting himself off from the bunch and preferring the lone seat at the bar where he could observe the antics and enjoy the entertainment. He was a reserved man, a terse blip in an otherwise raucous vector where Motley is now running the game in his agitated, leonine way. He skulks around the table imputing ill will, holding the trump with a 3, and waiting for the one mistake that will establish his temporal lebensraum and put him in the money. Faggiolino- always a fairly sorry mark-takes the cue and breaks at exactly 1:30.

"You got half an hour, fellas," I tell them.

Over at her post Specs is out of the running and decides she'd like another beer. The eyes are shot, the voice has gone incontrovertibly south in slurs, but the flair is completely intact. She's solid, Specs is, ordering her beer with a gusto normally reserved for the bunch surrounding the table as Faggiolino goes about a quick and anxious implosion at the table, shanking the tying ball off the wall by the side pocket. Motley roars a stultifying rendition of an old Bill King call, transposing a long gone Raider victory to his own. Timba guffaws and fills the room with a booming laughter. Faggiolino slumps against the table in the abrupt din and casts a thousand yard stare out the window, wondering.

I set the pint before Specs and notice Brooklyn leaning against the wall beside the door. He's beady-eyed and red-faced, and all that steam is collecting at the image of Thor in the mirror. He's wearing the traditional skull and lightning bolt tonight, which takes on a threatening complement to his face, and when I ask him what the problem is he ignores me and takes a few steps towards Thor like a young Cagney wielding his toy roscoe. Thor looks in the mirror and watches the approach, then turns to Brooklyn, smiling. Apparently he knows what's coming.

Brooklyn steps up to Thor face to face, though Thor is still seated, and asks him, "How come me and you never fought?"

"Ah, Jesus," says Specs, suddenly lifted from her self-steeped vapors, "you fucking men...."

"Really," Brooklyn continues, "let's go outside...."

He's got his head cocked back in an aggressive show of nerve, and from behind the bar I can see his hands going in and out of fists.

Thor, not expecting this at all, looks back at me as though he's not quite sure what he's supposed to do at this moment. Brooklyn seems every bit the intent pugilist and is showing no signs of backing down from the offer. I was once in the same predicament, but that was in a foreign country where the bartenders seemed to practice a very 'hands off' policy when it came to customer relations. Back in the States, however, I'm now the person that has to answer to the problem, but it's a very dicey situation when I find that I have only myself on which to rely.

So I ask Brooklyn for the cassette.

He doesn't answer me.

I ask louder, hoping one of the other schmucks

involved at the table might hear me and suss the obvious situation at hand here.

"Brooklyn, come on now," I say feebly.

This gets his attention. He directs his gaze to me and fixes it on what seems to be my adam's apple. A few threatening seconds go by, and just as I'm preparing myself for the worst, tears start streaming silently down his mug- I mean silent in that there is none of the usual sobbing- no sniffing, no blubbering caveats, nothing. The man is crying like I would read a book. Rivulets are arcing and forking down his face and he's just standing there, moving nothing but his fists, which continue to open and close like he was holding a heartbeat in his hands.

Then Faggiolino comes to. He looks over towards the bar, sees Brooklyn's unusual condition, but acts as though this kind of thing happens all the time. He chuckles and makes his way over, kindly placing his hand on Brooklyn's shoulder, saying, "Again? You're doing this again? Come on....Brooklyn," he says repeatedly now, "Brooklyn, come on...."

It's ten of two now, and Motley and Timba are showing no signs of letting up. Timba's got Motley parallel to his waist and is close to hurling him against the wall. Motley loves it. Timba's swinging him back and forth like a large bag of rice, letting Motley go airborne on the up-swing: as Motley wafts, Timba hauls him back in and centers Motley's body against his own, his left arm cradling Motley's chest and his right Motley's thighs. They repeat this over and over, completely oblivious to the recent developments at the bar.

Nice. I've got Romper Room at one end of the joint and a half-crazed, weeping Deadhead at the other. In between the two the pool table is nestled under the soft throw of the overhead light, sitting there like Canada. A couple of cues are laid out across the felt along with the ball Faggiolino had failed to sink. It's a reposing sight, and as I look at it- and look into it- I realize I have that kind of peace awaiting me in five short minutes. Ridiculously, I remember a certain quote from an otherwise celebrated general of WWII: "Take no counsel by fear," he'd once said. Whether this was meant to convey obstinance or outright rage had no bearing. I acted on it.

"Brooklyn," I said, "Aiko Aiko, boy, or whatever the hell, but, man, you've got to pull yourself together...."

I didn't know what the hell that was supposed to mean, but I did know that, at my best, I am a caring person. Bartenders for that matter are generally a caring breed. You learn to listen, and in that process you also learn what is genuine and what is palaver. Brooklyn was very drunk. The whiskey-as it is wont to do- had made that drunk an uncommon one, heightening everyday pressures to unnatural levels, and he now found himself a capitulated sort with all kinds of heinous prospects working away at his sense of reason. I knew what this entailed, having endured many such experiences. In short, he'll want to stay, thinking he can hash out his concerns with further drinking, which simply does not bode well for anyone. In fact, the condition just gets worse. I've made the mistake of allowing this to happen before and wound up just as shit-faced and unruly, even going so far as to challenge one's grief with my own. Believe me, this is an inane bit of business. The next thing you know it's sun-up and the garbage men are out. This could be a healthy sort of metaphor, but it's not. There is no metaphor. It is nothing but your own stupidity, which will have to be explained to someone in the forlorn tones of a terrible hangover and all of its nebulous memories.

I must've conveyed this piece of information to Brooklyn, because in the inscrutable nature of miracles he became a new man. Just like that, he brightened. "Play the tape!" he yelled.

"Alright!" I said, picking up the idea and running with it.

"But I need the tape!" I said.

"You're really not gonna play that are you?" Motley asked, walking over from a keeled-over and winded Timba.

"It's therapy," I said; nodding towards the new and winsome Brooklyn.

Brooklyn handed me the tape. I put it in and turned up the volume. Cheering filled the room, followed by the unmistakable sound of noodling and picking and the pattering of subdued percussion. Motley began in on a comically simulated half-twirl, half-now-you-see-it-now-you-don't gyration of the arms and head. Timba looked up and wheezed, trying to laugh, then fell back to huffing for air. Faggiolino took Specs in his arms and they went about a very sloppy waltz, traipsing through the back room and back, trying their damndest to keep their balance while stepping on each other's feet. Thor patted Brooklyn on the back in a relieved act of forgiveness, and I started in on the menial tasks. I wiped down the tables and put up the chairs; I shut the juke and pinball machine off, and flicked off the lights in the back (Good night, Fat Lady). I was home free at 1:58, dumping the spoons and drain shields and shakers into the bleach-infused hot water in the sinks. I had only the money and trash to do now.

So positioned, I hit the stop button on the stereo and the joint came down in groans and cheers.

"We've hit the wall, kids. Be good."

Brooklyn waved for his tape. I flipped it over to him and then motioned to the great big world of night awaiting them outside. Undoubtedly, there were further adventures ahead. Perhaps they'd head over to Motley's. He'd liberated a few beers from the cooler and thrown a wad of his winnings- all ones- on the bar. I took five and shoved the rest back. The others were outside hollering for him.

"Take it," he said.

"It's too much," I said, picking up the heap and slapping it in his hand.

He threw it back. "Throw it in the college fund then."

"You gotta eat," I said, acknowledging his recent sack.

"Nah," he said, "Shine just gave me a few salmon and steaks, so...." He patted his belly and left it at that.

"Gave? He doesn't give anything," I said.

Shine, another lifer who wasn't here tonight, was an SSL grifter and an adept shoplifter who lived a few minutes away from a Safeway. He hadn't paid for a piece of fish or meat in years, and had ample quantities of the stuff stored away in a special freezer. There was a cardboard placard on this freezer that read in bold black lettering: THE GOOD STUFF; Motley told me Shine owed him money but he took some of "The Good Stuff" in trade. Of course it wasn't easy since Shine is such a notorious miser and so deduced the amount of the debt in the face value of the food, going so far as to cut a salmon in half.

"You'd think the prick'd grown up in the Depression," he said.

"Kick his ass," I said, "On principle alone."

"Maybe. In the meantime, though...." He gestured outside and then walked out.

That was it: the door slammed behind them and I went to closing down the joint.

(by peter simonelli)

“..But you, the reading public, deserve to know the truth: *Everything you read in the American media, possibly including this column, has been censored.*”

Let me give you an example, a true story of capitalist censorship in action. (only the details have been altered to protect whatever remnants of a career may remain to me.) It had taken the obligatory three-Perrier lunch to convince one of New York's leading magazine editors to let me write a story on the feminization of poverty. He had demurred through the cold pressed-duck salad, digressed during the medallions of baby veal, and scowled through the Death-by-Chocolate course. Finally, over the decaf espressos, he sighed, “Ok, do your thing on poverty, but be sure to make it upscale.”

From this I learned Rule 1 of capitalist censorship: You can write about any social problem--sweatshops, starvation, child labor--so long as it is a problem experienced primarily by the rich.

Here is another example, from back in the days when I was naive enough to believe that the ‘marketplace of ideas’ had room enough for everyone. I was trying to persuade an immensely powerful, dressed-for-success editor (Ms. Mag?-ed) to assign a story on the plight of Third World women refugess. “Sorry,” she said with a charming wave of dismissal. “Third world women have never done anything for me.” (1987)

-Barbara Ehrenreich *The Worst Years of Our Lives*
She is the author of over 8 books, a columnist for the Progressive, among many others.



THE MISSION, S.F. in 97

Flashback to Entertainment Section of SF Chronicle Nov 30/1997

Editor Liz Lufkin- “How does a neighborhood make the transition from low key to cool? Chronicle staff Writer San Whiting has been watching the intersection of 16th and Valencia streets for more than a year. Whiting began to notice something more going on when Skylark opened last December. The ultra-cool lounge crowd—men in bowling shirts women in ‘70s-style shifts—discovered it opening night, without any publicity. Skylark apparently had cornered the world market in gold vinyl. There were deep, sunken booths perfect for slouching and sipping martinis, and the bartenders had perfected that indifferent attitude found in only the best spots. “I saw that and thought, ‘This neighborhood is on its way,’” Whiting says. “You didn’t have to pay a cover charge, wait in line or hassle with door-men.”..

..A month later, Kilowatt stopped offering live music. For Whiting, that made all the difference. “I’m very much against live music in bars,” she says, “It’s too loud. You can’t talk. It becomes a concert.” And be sure to check out the map by Susan Yule. It even shows where to find the best parking.”

Hip in the Heart of the Mission by San Whiting- “...At high tide they all fill up with bohemians in their retro thrift shop clothes, and more are on the way Decaying by day, 16th Street needs darkness to hide the ragged edges. ... A photographer comes into the Casanova Lounge selling Polaroids. To fill the frame, the bartender in a vinyl skirt jumps over the bar. ... The moment is frozen, one of a thousand on any night in the Wild West of 16th and Valencia.” (fucking amazing—where do these people come from-ed)

A bounty of Beers... Jukebox bars are the cool places to be (what bar does not have a jukebox? I never seen one... where what?-) — Sam Whiting “The machines are new, with spinning little discs in the display (CDs- not records ohhh I got it), but the songs are old and obscure jazz, blues, soul, punk, funk....” (obscure? Patsy Cline? Billie Holiday? Primus? Green Day? Hank Williams? Obscure!-ed)

“There are no cover charges or velvet ropes or dance floors or cocktail waitresses. These are bars,....” (ed- and there are no dancing pink elephants that chalk your cues, or hmong refugees giving you toiletries, or Martians landing with IPO secrets— yes it’s a bar—is this a ‘class’ problem I have here?)

“Here’s a guide to what’s inside. Casanova Lounge. An atmospheric parlor with orange walls, resin grape-bunch light fixtures hanging above the bar and swag lamps dangling over the couches and pool table.” (got one up on me there-got no idea what the fuck a swag lamp is-I’ll go back and see-ed)”The fake

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“We are a collectively owned and operated not-for-profit project. The collective serves as an umbrella organization for a few semi-independent projects, operating with a small paid staff and the aid of numerous volunteers. August of 1999 marked our 26th anniversary — making us one of the oldest anarchist, collective projects in the world. We currently distribute over 1000 titles in the USA and internationally, and have a retail bookstore in Seattle, Washington. Most of the books we distribute are available for purchase at this site or at our bookstore. We will be modifying our web site continuously as we add new titles and features. Of course we always welcome feedback about this web site. Send us some e-mail with any suggestions or questions you might have. Thanks!”

fieldstone fireplace is the kitschiest piece of Mission bric-a-brac since the vibrating bed in the Makeout Room. They decided to decorate the Casanova like an apartment and went on a second-hand shopping spree into the time-warped Midwest. The Casanova looks like the set of a '70s movie. There is nothing after 1974 on the juke, or in the décor, or worn by the bartenders and most of the clientele." (So Bob and John from Revolver, you guys are all pre 74 -and what is up with this 'time warp Midwest'? Most of suburban California looks like the Midwest now... walmarts, home depot... creepy little tinkly gift shops from here to eureka-ed) "Skylark- A monument to gold vinyl upholstery, the Skylark has the deepest booths this side of Elvis Presley's Memphis." (Yeah and people in the other bar over THERE wear glasses like Roy Orbison! And THAT place has a fucking *skag* lamp sraight outta a Jarmusch movie!-ed) "Open less than a year, Skylark has a reputation for attracting weekend Marina slummers looking for a dive." (a dive! It's so kitsch and cool it's a dive! Martini bar a dive! Average income double of ours!-ed) "Given that skinny sideburns and goatees are the norm in cyberspace, the Skylark is as clean-cut as an online party." Albion-"Open 10 years, Albion has aged with its clientele into a workingclass neighborhood bar. ...Separating the bar-room from the pool room is an interior alleyway that feels like a medieval torture chamber." (the columns in this article are a torture, not a 3 foot 4 foot wide walk space to the pool room there-ed) Kilowatt "draws a more alternative, punk crowd than the other bars. ...it's a torn-jeans-and T-shirt place.... Kilowatt is the most likely place to see a really bad haircut, such as shaved on the sides and long on top. (Hey that was me in 97 you shit! Well ok not really, but what's the matter with t-shirts and jeans? Well ain't no *SWAG* lamps -ed) "Dr. Bombay's -....the jukebox carries the soundtrack to "Trainspotting," and many of the people look just right for bit parts."

(OH-uh, that means you all look like junkies, heheh...I figured that one out ..hehehe.-ed)

"Jukebox Sampler 'Gang of Four, T. Rec., The Clash" (pretty obscure stuff again huh?-ed) "Jack's Elixir- The closet thing to an Irish pub on 16th street. Behind the double doors a cheery greeter with a brogue says, "hello, gents." (An Irish pub? ..oh now...my god...'with a brogue'....???) -END!

HOW LATINO BARS GO WHITE AND HIP

From El Reportero, SF, 12/6/00---El Tin-Tan bar on 16th and Mission--owner Roberto Gomez says he and staff have been repeatedly targeted by police offices."The Police checked our permits a least ten times this year."..."The officers are loud, disrespectful and threatening." A worker, Brenda Piedrasanta, said they threatened to arrest her if she did not produce ID, and after repeatedly telling the officer that she did not drive, he slapped her hand and told her to look him in the eyes. "I told him that I knew my ID number and that I would write it down. I told a co-wroker to call my boss and tell him I was getting arrested. Then the police officer told me that I was an illegal alien," Brenda said. Owner Gomez said he has hired security for the sole purpose of writing down police badge numbers. . He is getting offers for the bar, "If they offer me a ton of money, I may have to sell."

The officers will not say who is lodging noise complaints.

JOE O'DONOGHUE



WHEN CAPITAL SPEAKS

THE CITY LISTENS

Back in the late 80's a Live/Work regulation was passed which allowed industrial areas to also be residential in order to help artists -who were thriving in the South of Market Area (SOMA) due to cheap industrial space. It contained language, to make it enticing for the developers, that rescinded fees for schools, transit and affordable housing allowances that are typically charged or demanded from the city. Of course this law was merely used to build luxury loft spaces and over 4,000 have been built in the 90's. They are typically out of place ugly block/squared and un-pedestrian friendly; resembling miniature gated community housing for the rich, rather than 'houses'. And as the SF Bay Guardian soon found out, most are just being used as office space or as condos and not a combination live/work space by artists or local light manufacturing.

Joe O'Donoghue, president of the Residential Builders Association and the leading advocate of live-work (lofts for the rich) development, is a very powerful and rich developer in San Francisco. He said at one city meeting, he doesn't believe lofts should be subject to the same fees or scrutiny as housing. And he rejected the idea that live-work projects should be charged the school impact fee at the full residential rate because loft-dwellers are not having children. "How many babies have been born in the South of Market lofts? O'Donoghue asked. "You're going to have children living in the South of Market? You can't be serious. I wouldn't live South of Market. But there's a generation of young people who like it because of the high ceilings."

This is just one example of arrogance; worse follow. Whether a rich property owner has children now or never doesn't matter anywhere. Our schools are almost completely funded on property taxes. By law, they are all to pay. And by city law, developers are to pay also and build only a measly 10% affordable which O'Donoghue and his kind are not required to since they are using the live/work law completely out of the spirit it was written in. Since 1996, hundreds of citizen activists and some city supervisors (Bierman, Leno, Ammannio) have been fighting a nearly losing battle to stop the lightening fast permit approval by the planning commission (appointed by real estate whore Willie Brown) and close the loophole which has already costs the city tens of millions of dollars in lost fees.

And O'Donoghue is also at every meeting. With thug 'construction worker' allies to shout opponents down and to obstruct the entire democratic process. In June 99, he showed up with hundreds of these "construction workers", jammed City Hall and blocked, at least temporarily, an attempt to ban construction of live-work lofts. For nearly three hours, contractors and his allies lined up to denounce Supervisor Sue Bierman's plan to put a six-month moratorium on construction of the units and stop the city from taking any action on existing permits for the buildings.

As a writer for the Chronicle put it, "The condos, which actually are rarely used for work, are very, very hot with the young money crowd coming out of Silicon Valley."

After the meeting outside, he and his tough guys of course got involved a physical tussle. O'Donoghue said he wasn't happy

that (elected city supervisor) Bierman's plan wasn't killed outright. "She didn't have the votes, that was clear," he said. "The continuance is a disgrace to the democratic process." Democracy only exists for this man when the votes go his way. Otherwise why take over the whole meeting, shouting down others? At another meeting in late Aug 1999, the Sheriff posted 20 deputies outside the supervisor's chambers expecting from trouble. O'Donoghue showed up with dozens of supporters, many of them in jeans, T-shirts and work boots. (but how many were actually rich contractors?) They held placards with the word "moratorium" crossed out and taunted members of the anti-loft brigade. His statement was: "San Francisco needs sensible housing policies. Anybody can see we're in the midst of housing crisis." Yes, AFFORDABLE housing crisis. The upper class does not get evicted here and have to move out. These lofts/live/work buildings go for \$500,000 to over a million dollars. The ones that get used for office space also don't have to meet have parking requirements or transit fees. If being lived in, they are also very low density people-wise, taking up space that could house three times as many workers.(1)

O'Donoghue added greatly to his power in recent years by co-authoring a 1994 ballot measure, Proposition G, that he used to become an unappointed king in the Department of Building Inspection. That agency, little noticed outside the construction world, wields power over all building done in the city, by determining whether structures meet electrical, plumbing and other code requirements. The department has been in the news recently with revelations about local and federal investigations into allegations of possible impropriety. O'Donoghue's name has not surfaced in any of these probes.

"Joe got through Building Inspection myriad changes in the building code in record time that allowed his people to produce maybe 4,000 live-work units," said Calvin Welch, a nonpro-fitting housing activist who has fought with O'Donoghue. "I lived through the entire high-rise battle from the mid-'70s to mid-'80s, and none of those guys — (Walter) Shorenstein, (Ben) Swig — worked at wiring the entire system the way Joe has." When O'Donoghue took over the Residential Builders Association, it had about 50 members who paid \$25 apiece in annual dues. Today, about 600 members pay on a sliding scale by which the biggest contractors give \$10,000 a year. The association's purpose has always been to get members' construction jobs through the bureaucracy.

They also donate tens of thousands to political campaigns and O'Donoghue admitted in a speech they helped elect the mayor. In 1986, O'Donoghue said, "we were the black hat organization, the whipping boy for every wacko in this city. I decided enough is enough. We're going to organize and kick ass." This absurd notion of multi-millionaires such as him, being the underdog against neighborhood/housing activists is a common theme.

"Joe doesn't give a damn about anything else — neighborhood character, compatibility with existing residential structures, the history of houses, housing affordability, nothing but work for the boys," said Stephen Williams, a lawyer who won a 1997 court fight against an O'Donoghue-backed proposed demolition of a Victorian on Sutter Street. Williams is the only person I could find in the papers' archives that actually won in a fight against him. People in Potrero Hill who were trying to preserve a lot as open space admitted they backed down when they found out O'Donoghue was against them.

Michael Hamman, a contractor who fought the O'Donoghue-sponsored 1994 ballot measure that restructured the Building Inspection agency, said O'Donoghue "threatened me and offered to put a pair of concrete shoes on me and let me sleep with the fishes." Jim WalkingBear, a paraplegic who uses a wheelchair, said that several years ago he angered O'Donoghue by

telling a San Francisco restaurant owner who was an acquaintance of O'Donoghue's about what he called minor disabled-access problems at her establishment.

"O'Donoghue left messages for four days straight on my phone, threatening me," said WalkingBear, who does volunteer work on disability access in a state-affiliated outreach program. "O'Donoghue said he'd send a couple of the boys down to take care of me and after they'd beat on my head a bit, I'd straighten out. It frightened me quite a bit."

Timothy Gillespie, a former consultant to small hotels, said that in the summer of 1994, O'Donoghue learned that Gillespie was asking around about the business practices of O'Donoghue's ally Randy Shaw of the Tenderloin Housing Clinic.

"He called me and said, 'I understand you are making calls about my friend Randy Shaw, and I want to tell you if you don't stop immediately, me and some of my friends will take you into a gutter and bash your head in with a shovel,'" Gillespie said.

O'Donoghue denied making either threats, saying he only told Gillespie that he had gone too far in his attack on Shaw. Two years ago, O'Donoghue became angry with labor leader Stan and left a phone message saying he hoped Smith would "bust a kidney" or have a heart attack. O'Donoghue said his call was prompted by Smith's opposition to a ballot measure to remodel Laguna Honda. In 1992, he put a measure on the ballot rezoning land across from Kaiser Permanente Medical Center on Geary Boulevard, successfully selling the proposal to voters as pro-health care. O'Donoghue and some friends owned buildings on the land, and he walked away with millions from the subsequent sale to Kaiser. Sean McNulty, one of the department's first deputy directors under the Proposition G reorganization, ran afoul of O'Donoghue and was pushed out of his position after about a year because he wouldn't always comply with O'Donoghue's wishes. Hutchinson then got that post. "Sean is very ethical. He wouldn't do what Joe wants — lightening up on code enforcement, not looking too closely, signing off on the Residential Builders Association permits," said one department source who, like all nonmanagement department staff interviewed by the Chronicle, asked not to be identified for fear of retribution by O'Donoghue or his allies.

O'Donoghue watchers say his alliance with Warren Hinckle, one time 60's leftist, now right-wing hack columnist for the Independent gives O'Donoghue yet another of his bases of power, the ability to lash out in print at anyone standing in his way. The alliance is more than philosophical. O'Donoghue says he pays Hinckle about \$10,000 during election years for ads in the Argonaut, a tabloid that Hinckle puts out from time to time. In addition, O'Donoghue says he gave Hinckle free rent for his Argonaut office for five to seven years in the 1990s. Smith, the construction trades labor leader who has battled with O'Donoghue, says that with O'Donoghue positioned as he is, he has been able to get away with being the city bully. In Building Inspection he has so much political influence that he can do as he sees fit, and no one dares say anything against him for fear of jeopardizing their jobs. Ammiano's appointees (a left-liberal city supervisor who has amazing grass roots support and represents the biggest challenge to Mayor Willie Brown's corporate boot), have sparred with O'Donoghue at hearings. Esther Marks, who served as treasurer of Ammiano's campaign, said, O'Donoghue calls Marks culturally insensitive, noting that she voted against an Irish dance studio's bid for a permit when she was on the

Board of Appeals. During one recent Building Inspection Commission meeting, O'Donoghue said he knew Marks had a tendency to behave as "Madame Empress." Marks, who is of Japanese heritage, said that after the meeting ended, O'Donoghue whispered to her: "You come from an imperial dynasty. I'm an Irishman, and I'm going to roll over you."

O'Donoghue's version is that he told her: "You come from a culture that has trampled over the rights of other cultures, and I'll be goddamned if you'll trample over the rights of the Irish culture." Amazing how he can label his rich racist bullying as a benefit to 'Irish culture'!!! As for his role in the appointment of building inspection commissioners, O'Donoghue said Ammiano's pick of Marks and Walker politicized the commission and he had to step in and talk to Mayor Brown about the situation. "As the leader of the construction industry in this city, we had the obligation" to make sure the commission was well-balanced, he said. Again, democracy only when he gets all the votes. At a September 2000 meeting in support of 172 more 'lofts' to be built on the 400 block of 4th street he said "It's entry-level housing." WHAT? Yeah, there's a lot of construction 'workers' and families out there that can buy a \$500,000 loft.

In Aug 99 he had this comment, " Sue Hestor [an attorney that has spent 20 years fighting real estate pigs and for affordable housing] and Debra Walker have convinced enough people at City Hall that we should not build housing in these areas, so we are going to build offices instead. We don't care what we build; we are bulding contractors. If they want office parks we will build them office parks." Office space suddenly in late 98 became two to three times more profitable than housing for contractors. There was no halt on building housing. He is obscuring all the arguments, and basically lying.

If Joe O'Donoghue approached the city with a plan for 10,000 units of affordable housing, with Fed and City help to make it more profitable for him, the entire city would embrace him as a hero. But instead he is building more office space in residential neighborhoods, and then, we can be sure, he will blame that increased crunch on living space on the people who wanted affordable housing. The most effective way to obscure the facts, to demonize voices trying to restrain capital, is to label them not -in -my backyard no-growth people--to get workers to see them as the enemy. It works, as lies do, if repeated enough in headlines and TV news stories.

From the SF weekly 7/5/00 "At Foreign Cinema, a French -speaking chef recently prepared seared chicken breasts in wine sauce with a balsamic vinaigrette salad for members of the Mission Merchants Association. They gathered last month in the restaurant's quiet courtyard... .. Glikshtern [-owner of hip bar Liquid-accused of beating three latino tuff guys with a crowbar] invited developer Joe O'Donoghue to speak.

"San Francisco is at risk of becoming a city of rich folks," Ron Chavez ...told the group. "So What!" attorney and landowner Victor Vitlin shouted back. O'Donoghue argued about the ideological differences between "affordable" and "low-cost" housing, but gave up in frustration, saying no one would listen to him because he doesn't wear a ponytail:

"All you want to hear is the typical progressive crap." And then "How come when I talk, I threaten, and when you talk, it's the voice of democracy?" O'Donoghue began to yell, his thick Irish accent taking over. "You're nothing but a goddamn Englishman! You took our land and made us poor. It's unfortunate the IRA missed you on your way over!" —It's unfortunate that the 'socialist' wing of the IRA, if it

even exists anymore, doesn't come over and give HIM a 'talking' to!

To end here is a piece from James Connolly: IWW when he lived in the US, and one of the most respected heroes of Irish independence, murdered in battle there:

LET US FREE IRELAND!

Let us free Ireland! Never mind such base carnal thoughts as concern work and wages, healthy homes, or lives unclouded by poverty.

Let us free Ireland! The rack-renting landlord; is he not also an Irishman, and wherefore should we hate him? Nay, let us not speak harshly of our brother, yea, even when he raises our rent.

Let us free Ireland! The profit-grinding capitalist, who robs us of three fourths of the fruit of our labour, who sucks the very marrow of our bones when we are young, and then throws us out in the street like a worn-out tool when we are grown prematurely old in his service, is he not an Irishman, and mayhapa a patriot, and wherefore should we think harshly of him?

Let us free Ireland! 'The land that bred and bore us.' And the landlord who makes us pay for permission to live upon it. Whoop it up for liberty!

'Let us free Ireland,' says the patriot who won't touch Socialism. Let us all join together, and cr-r-rush the br-r-rutal Saxon. Let us all join together, says he, all classes and creeds. And, says the town worker, after we have crushed the Saxon and freed Ireland, what will we do? Oh, then you can go back to your slums, same as before. Whoop it up for liberty!

And, says the agricultural worker, after we have freed Ireland, what then? Oh, then you can go scraping around for the landlord's rent or the money-lenders' interest same as before. Whoop it up for liberty!

After Ireland is free, says the patriot who won't touch Socialism, we will protect all classes, and if you won't pay your rent you will be evicted same as now. But the evicting party, under the command of the sheriff, will wear green uniforms and the Harp without the Crown, and the warrant turning you out on the roadside will be stamped with the arms of the Irish Republic. Now isn't that worth fighting for?

And when you cannot find employment, and, giving up the struggle for life in despair, enter the poorhouse, the band of the nearest regiment of the Irish army will escort you to the poorhouse door to the tune of 'St Patrick's Day'. Oh! it will be nice to live in those days.

'With the Green Flag floating o'er us' and an ever-increasing army of unemployed workers walking about under the Green Flag, wishing they had something to eat. Same as now! Whoop it up for liberty!

Now, my friend, I also am Irish, but I'm a bit more logical. The capitalist, I say, is a parasite on industry; as useless in the present stage of our industrial development as any other parasite in the animal or vegetable world is to the life of the animal or vegetable upon which it feeds.

The working class is the victim of this parasite - this human leech, and it is the duty and interest of the working class to use every means in its power to oust this parasite class from the position which enables it to thus prey upon the vitals of labour.

Therefore, I say, let us organize to meet our masters and destroy their mastership; organize to drive them from their hold upon public life through their political power; organize to wrench from their robber clutch the land and work-

shops on and in which they enslave us; organize to cleanse our social life from the stain of social cannibalism, from the preying of man upon his fellow man. Organize for a full, free and happy life FOR ALL OR FOR NONE.

(2) james connolly!

1) I am using my conservative eye-ball estimate of the city. A 3 story typical rental house here has 12 to 15 occupants. These three story 'loft' houses or 3 to 5 thousand square foot warehouse lofts typically only have 1 to 2 people per floor. There are certainly many 3 story rental buildings here that house 15 to 20 people.

(2) Workers' Republic, 1899 also reproduced in Socialism Made Easy, 1909



On July 25, 1998 the Cort family painted over the "Lilli Ann" mural on the Triangle building at 17th and Treat. It was a huge five story vibrant splash of color that greeted anyone walking down Bryant towards 16th—visible five to six blocks away— and added a pretty amplified embellishment to the older urban amalgam of brick warehouses which housed many small manufacturing firms. Now that the 19th and 18th area is being filled with lofts and plastic Walmarts style architecture, and the lot across will soon contain O'Donoghue office buildings, it's destruction is even more offensive. I've come to appreciate it in its absence—now a symbol of how little the property owners give a shit about anything, except profit. Nicknamed "Lilli Ann" for the garment factory that used to occupy the building, the mural had been valued at \$500,000. The city gave \$40,000 for the mural in 1986, the largest commission for a piece of art at the time.

The New Mission News began calling the Corts shortly after their crime. The family showed such arrogant stupidity that they've earned the eternal hatred of thousands in the city. They didn't even have the sense to talk through a lawyer—so sure they are untouchable by law or community concerns. They couldn't even keep their lies straight. It is illegal to touch a mural in California without contacting the artist or artists' estate first. Though in an Aug 5th Chronicle story, the paper said the Corts did not return calls.

Mr. Robert Cort told the NMN, that the three-story abstract work, designed by the late Chuy Campusano and painted by Elias Rocha, was covered up to make way for permanent advertising at the request of a software company which would be moving into the building. Mrs. Cort said there is nothing they could do about it—the wall had been leased by their new tenant. University Games then denied they agreed to pay for the ad space or that it is even leasing offices in the Triangle building. The Corts told attorneys for Elias Rocha, that tenant complaints of water seepage made it necessary to waterseal the mural wall. It does not really rain in San Francisco from March through October. Victor in the NMN "... they did not prep or patch the wall as they did on the other sides of the building. The whole process was done hurriedly..." In fact, since I walked to that area everyday, I can attest that the refurbishing of the inside and outside of the building was a very slow 6 month or more process while the mural disappeared within a day or so. At the time a recovery process could have saved the mural. But the Corts didn't care, or that they had broken the law. Robert Cort said in July 1998, "If somebody wants to sue us they can ahead and do it, I'm a lawyer." So they tied it up in court long enough that the paint had bonded to the mural which means it is lost forever.

Robert Cort Sr. seems like a typical richbastard lawyer. In 1994, he filed suit on tenants nearly TWO years after they vacated his

Rattlesnake#1-page 53

TAXI! TAXI!

-tommy s.

Cab stories get more insolent and sad-tragedy in the 90's as it becomes less possible to earn a living wage (gate fees up from \$60 to \$100, Yellow Cab putting millions into anti-worker legislation....) ...more real riff raff getting the job, and I ain't talking eastern immigrants, since they always offer the best conversation in my experience...

(quotes from drivers—all white Americans.....89 to '00)

*"You live here? I thought you were just buying crack" (dropped off bags of bottles on the sidewalk before getting in) cab—"Don't leave NOTHING on the street in this neighborhood, they'll steal it!" I said "2020 Cesar Chavez Street, please" ...cab—"Oh you mean Army Street." (with a sneer) "I didn't vote for that." (Mike M. had similar experience 2 years later) cab—"Look at them! There THEY are!" Pointing to a group of very docile brown teenagers on the corner of 24th and Folsom. cab—"Use to be a good neighborhood. Use to be Irish." (No, it was NEVER majority Irish...and crime was higher per capita in the 30's, 40's and then the 60's then now.) Cab—"Who-ese your FRIENDS on the steps heheheh" Cab—"Glad those fucking projects are gone." (though at a cabbie's wages he would be eligible for living there) Cab—"You look like you're drunk. I don't normally pick up drunks." (OK, I'll drive next time fellow worker!) Cab—"Nice, now they're painting the houses, since most of the scum is moving out". Cab—"Were you at O'Farrall's?" "No, I was at Kimo's for a band." "Why you going to 24th and Folsom? Whorehouse there? Latin chicks?" (I almost hit this guy) —cab—"They can't fucking drive here." (as he cuts off peds at every chance). Me—"2020 Cesar Chavez." Cab—"You mean Army street? (looks in rearview mirror to intimidate me-). Me—"I need to go to the airport." Cab- (assuming I didn't live here) "yeah the Mission, ok to visit...but..."

*****Have to counter with more positive rides in the past year (don't take much anymore, don't make the money) Cab- (looked like 23 year hipster rocker but...) "God I love this neighborhood, I moved to this city for this...now they're ruining it...hey (very enthusiastic) thanks for the tip!" Cab- (figured he was from mid-east so I dropped some reference) "Yes please tell everyone you know what they are doing to Iraq! It is horrible! Why do Americans put up with it! But I know the press is just as bad here as home...(sighs) ohhh nice street!!!!..."

Cab—"They even clean the streets here now, didn't for us. Fuck this city."

building for damages, back rent and fees totaling over \$500,000. The only thing the two companies as tenants did was refuse to re-sign their lease with Cort. The case dragged through the court for over a year and was dismissed.

He also owns a home in the Richmond District adjacent to others valued at over a million dollars, but interestingly, his house's recorded assessed value was then only \$63,589. In 98 the Cort family controlled real estate with a net 'assessed' value over \$12 million. It is much more by now.

In September 1998, Robert Cort Jr. (the son-of-a-bastard) said, "The mural was gone, and there was no saving it. Nobody said anything about the mural for 15 years. It was crumbling. Water was pouring into the building. We had to repair it for our new tenants."

It was not crumbling. And mural restoration is a common thing these days. The city will even help pay for it. And we have to lodge timely comments with landlords to prove we want art preserved? Why didn't you ask US or the artists?

After some irate locals spraypainted protests on the Cort's new white-washed building and paint balled it, Robert Jr. said "I can't believe they're (local artists) committing crimes over a painting. We paid for a vandalism (warning) sign. People are literally calling in the middle of the night and swearing at my parents. Everybody in my family is irate. I'm so pissed off at the issue, the question of saving murals is over." YOU never questioned saving any murals rich boy—that is the problem. These people all talk in circles like Joe O'Donoghue—talking about OTHER people breaking the law!!! And don't tell us when a 'question' is over! They really are lucky all they got was nasty phone calls, especially as we learn more about them. They recently bought the huge Bayview Bank building on Mission and evicted over 60 small businesses including many non-profits.

In August of 98, a lawsuit was filed against Cort Sr charging him with an illegal owner-move-in eviction of two Mission District senior citizens. Cort Jr had not moved into the two-unit house after the June 97 eviction. A complete violation of the law. The evicted are both in their late 70's and had lived at 3257 20th Street for 33 years! Tenants in the front unit, Lucia Abea and her kids, were evicted in December 96.

Cort Jr., said in September 98 "My family never kicked anybody out in the Mission. My parents are hard-working reputable people." Yeah, better wear a hat, so your ass don't get sunburnt, while you are talking out its hole!

The then unoccupied unit on 20th street stood gutted for renovation with no work going on. "I don't think it's responsible to keep buildings in disrepair. We only have two properties in the Mission." The New Mission News checked on that in 1998 and found that four of the Cort family's eleven properties were in the Mission including the 1890 Bryant Street then vacant Best Foods Complex. Robert Jr. who-should-wear-a-hat owns the Atlas Café at 20th and Alabama (hear that hipsters?). His sister, Deborah, owns the then—vacant Latino Theater on Mission Street between 21st and 22nd.

Robert Jr. "My parents are not speculators. We are not live/work developers." And yes, two years later 60 small businesses get evicted on Mission Street.

Finally the case over the illegal mural destruction was

settled in Feb 2000. Cort Sr. caused the case to drag on for a year and a half, effectively making restoration of the mural impossible. He sued the City of SF since it had given the artist a grant to create the mural in 1982 (what?-unbelievable—don't lawyers get disbarred for this frivolous shit?) and he sued the company that originally sold him the building! Fortunately some legal heavyweights joined the fight on the artists' and communities side: Heller, Erman White and Mcaullife. But beware of this 'failed' victory. Only because a bonding agent was influenced by so much support was the case able to go on. The judge Martin Jenkins ordered a \$80,000 security bond for it to go to trial! -some democracy-

So in the end the Cort scum paid \$200,000 when original restoration would have cost \$127,000—or nothing if they had left it alone

--lgyy on the San Francisco streets!--

TURD SUFFRAGE Turd Caen from Turd-Filled Donut issue #6 Nov 1999

Finally, there's only a week until election time. One week, 'til the names Clint Reilly and Frank Jordan are finally shuffled off in the dumpster of history an homeless can go back to sleeping in the doorway of Reilly's campaign office on Mission. Just one more week. And it'll be another four years 'ill we're treated to the, embarrassing sight of a cop leading a line of 4th graders with brooms in a "cleanup" of 16th and Mission BART Plaza. Yes, its election time and even the Tenderloin is not safe from mayoral candidates, out shaking hands and looking for votes. In fact, Da Mayor, himself. Willie Brown was spotted at the annual Blessing of The pets at St. Boniface Church (Jones/Golden Gate), getting out the vote. Every year the church offers a service for The City's pets, where they are prayed for and anointed with holy water. While folks lined up with their dogs, cats, and even parakeets in cages, Willie double parked his limo and posed for pictures with the newly blessed pups, who, like the candidates apparently learned at least one trick: "Shake!" Well, why not? If the dead can vote in this town, why not DOGS? This reporter caught up to Willie as he ducked back into his limo. I yelled, "Hey Willie! How come the PETS in this town got it so good, and all the PEOPLE have to starve in the streets!?" But he just grinned back and slammed the door, so I turned to the surly mounted cops on horses and asked, "Getting those things BLESSED today?" They just grunted and scowled. Lighten up, gays. Even pigs can get blessed at Boniface.

One Turd-Filled Donut reader reports that Brown was also sighted working the crowd at The Castro Street Fair last month. Willie was grinning broadly and shaking hands when our correspondent stepped forward to yell, point blank, "Willie! Why'd you fuck up my TOWN, man? Why'd you sell this place OUT? In true Willie style, Da Mayor was unfazed and like a ventriloquist's dummy, grunted under his breath never losing his smile 'Why don't you JUST MOVE AWAY, huh? JUST GO!' Sure Willie, but can my DOG stay?

SHOPPING CARTS ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAILL Yeah. It's election time alright. You can't go anywhere without running into some politician. Clint Reilly keeps holding press conference in front of the bulldozed Mission Rock Shelter to call attention to Mayor Brown's failed homeless policies. Judging from Reilly's pamphlets, his policy would be, "next time bulldoze the place with the homeless STILL IN IT!" Wandering Scavenger also reports that he was eating breakfast at the Mission Street dive JIM'S RESTAURANT, when Reilly and his wife came in to court the 2 dollar breakfast vote. Our reporter lunged at

Reilly and was about to yell, "Get out of our neighborhood. rich creep!" when his girlfriend ordered him to behave at the breakfast table- I'm sure Reilly got what was; coming to him, anyway, though, if he got as sick as I do when I eat there...The Turd-Filled Donut had a more successful public encounter with Supervisor Amos Brown. Amos was spotted on Polk, smiling broadly leisurely taking off his coat and getting into his Mercedes, in front of City Hall. This reporter yelled, "Hey Amos..." He smiled and nodded and started to wave. I finished, "You fucking suck!!!" He quickly grimaced, got in his car and slammed the door. If you want to tell Amos what YOU think of his anti-homeless legislation, look for his home phone number and address later in this issue. TAGGERS ENDORSE GONZALEZ! Back in the Mission, graffiti writer, Heart tell the Turd-Filled Donut that he was motioned over to a car at a stop light on Valencia only to see the driver was Dis4rict Attorney candidate, Matt Gonzalez. Gonzalez told him, "Tell all the (graffiti0writers to vote for me. If I'm elected I'm to make graffiti legal!" Wait...you mean it's ILLEGAL ? To write on walls ?? OVERHEARD: ON PEE-SOAKED SYCAMORE STREET, which should be renamed Sick-A-MOST. A cheerful allay dweller informs, "This is my personal record! I've been smoking crack for 37 days!" See, everyone sounds like a politician these days. On a rainy night at Hunt's, a man walks in and tries to sell a purple fedora wita HOOKER for money?!" He then puts on the hat and grins, and she warms up a little_ "Now that's a nice PIMP hat!" She gets her hot dog and out they go, together into the rain.....And, over on Sycamore a man tells us of getting a urinating in public ticket from an Officer S. Christ. I guess he has a different idea of the Golden Rule.....NO JUSTICE NO PEE: There's been alot of marching and protest in the streets lately, before the election- 3 Free Mumia marches, one anti-police brutality march and the Eviction Defense Network's "March Of The Evicted". which, the name would indicate, would be attended by half The City these days. At the Coalition on Homelessness' rally in UN Plaza to kickoff a national campaign for homeless folks' civil rights, a speaker condemned the City for leaving sprinklers on all night so people can't sleep in the parks. The Wandering Scavenger yelled out, "If you screw the heads all the way down the sprinklers won't work!" Sound advice. At the 2nd Mumia march, the massive crowd surged up Powell past two lonely looking animal rights activists, dressed in cow suits, handing out vegetarian literature in front of McDonalds. Picked the wrong day, I guess... A couple hundred homeless folks packed the Local 6 Union Hall to ratify the Homeless People's Congress' Action Plan To End Homelessness demanding housing and non-police solutions to homelessness. If people keep getting evicted at the current rate, it really WILL be One Big Union. A CHICKEN IN EVERY SHOPPING CART: Now, with Tom Ammiano announced as a write-in, Reilly REALLY looks finished. Not only did HUNT'S put his sign up but he appears to be actually trying to win over the City's most sizable voting block, the homeless, THEMSELVES! A man at the 19th and Dolores Free Coffee and Donuts thing tells me that he met Reilly, and asked him what his plan was. Reilly responded by saying, "Well, I know what the homeless need because I was homeless myself for one month." The man was unimpressed. "A month huh?" he asked. "Well did you ever have to sleep in bushes? Did you ever have to SMOKE CRACK or use drugs like Heroin to feel good so you could stand being homeless? Did you ever have to take speed so you could stay awake all night, so no one would steal your stuff? Did you ever have to sell your body for money to eat?!" Reilly, he said, turned sort of white and mumbled, "Uh, no." Just think if he had said yes, he might have won the election. TURD ON ICE: Yes, the election's only a week away and I just can't wait. Finally an end to the election sweeps! It's become so bad here in

ole Ess Eff that yours truly became, last week, the first person EVERY in the HISTORY OF URINE to get ARRESTED for pee-ing in Sycamore Alley! I mean, this is the filthiest alley in all of Ess Eff! I had been drinking beer on Clarion, and went around the corner to puck up another 40, but first stopped off in the shadow of a mini-van to relieve myself. Next thinking I knew, a cop had pulled up, and I was being handcuffed! These are dark days, indeed. As the cop car pulled away with me in it, I thought, "Wow, here I am, part of THE HOMELESS PROBLEM that all the candidates are always talking about, one of the 'bums' that's ruining everyone's 'QUALITY OF LIFE'. Just think, my pee is FRONT PAGE NEWS!" What a drag. At 6:00 AM, me and all the other Quality of Lifers got out and our crowd made a slow march up 7th, just in time for the stores to started selling again. I thought, cheer up guys, in a couple days, no matter who wins, we can go back to drinking our beer in peace.....

TURD CAEN turd filled donut issue 7 spring 2000

...First, Cheap John from Hauling the Tenderloin junk store, seemingly disappears without a trace, and, NOW, the Urine Man's gone! For as long as anyone can remember - at least over 10 years - the famed Urine Man has been living in his parked bus at 24th and Illinois in China Basin and, as everyone surely knows, he's The Urine Man because he has had a huge sign posted on his bus the whole time that reads, "CURE AIDS BY DRINKING YOUR OWN URINE!" Though this controversial and disgusting, theory has been widely ignored by the mainstream press, the Urine Man did seem to have built up a small group of adherents, who gathered at his bus to crystal meth and listen to his terse dispatches about the evils of food and the beauty of urine. Now the bus has disappeared. Where could the Urine Man have gone? Coupled with the mysterious disappearance of Hauling it could only signify some sort-of Wingnut Rapture, where they have all disappeared from the face of the Earth. Has the Urine Man, at least, gone to a better place? Early evidence suggests otherwise. A Turd-Filled Donut reader spotted his urine filled bus newly parked up on Iowa Street under the freeway..

The disappearance of Cheap John's store at Hyde and Turk is still a mystery, too. The landlord, an old Asian guy, merely said, "He Go! He Crazy man!" The lady at The Palace Of Fine junk said, "I never even knew that was his name-" A guy selling warm Coronas out of a shopping cart on Turk said, "I stayed AWAY from that dude!" Unfortunately, Cheap John himself offered no dues, either. I found him standing next to a truck with his piano and mattress on the back In front of All-Star Donuts and asked him what happened but he only would clench and unclench his fist and repeat, "Ibey'll pay. Oh, yes, theyll pay..." I asked some 20-something's who were moving Into his old spot what they planned to do in there. "Oh, you know. Computer stuff," they said. Nothing Important." I couldn't agree more.

THOUSAND YEAR REICH? Bell's Donuts at 6th and Market has changed their name to the somewhat more expansionist Donut World, and has a map of the world printed on their new boxes. I looked on the box, but couldn't find 6th Street on the map.

WRITE-IN LOVE. Congratulations go out to TFD workfare diarist, RG, as he is soon to be married! Back in November, RG was go Inspired and filled with optimism when Tom Ammiano's surprise write-In candidacy for mayor forced a run-off that he proposed marriage to his long time girlfriend Roxanne who works at POWER, the workfare rights union. The couple consulted Ammiano and he agreed to perform the marriage ceremony if he was elected mayor. Tom didn't win, but RG did; they're getting married later this year. Meanwhile, others In Turd-Filled Donut land aren't so lucky in love. One reader reports coming home to his doorway at 6th and Natoma to find a banana with a condom on it.

15 MINUTES OF FAME Famous panhandler, The Bushman was spotted with a small crowd of groupies at 6th and Minna. The Bushman, as reported in The Chronicle, is a 40-something, black guy who hangs out at Fishermen's Wharf, disguised as a bush, or shrub, and jumping out and scaring unwitting tourists. Then he asks for spare change. "I'm going to be in TWO new movies they filmed down there]" Bushman announced, as he bummed a smoke. "I'm In that new one with Keanu Reeves!" A girl in front of the Hotel Auburn gushed, "I can't believe Its really the Bushman." I loaned her my pen and he signed autographs. The free lunch crowd at St. Anthony's got a break from the Keanu Reeves movie. too, The director rented out St. Anthonys one night when it was closed, to shoot inside the dining hall, and the money went to buy a special steak dinner for everyone.

DOWN IN THE MISSION, those annoying security lights that turn on automatically when you walk by am going in all over as rich folks move in, but Jorge, the famed San Carlos street drinker says he LIKES them. "If I sit and drink under the light, I Wont lose any Of my stuff when I leave," he says- Also on San Carlos, this reporter spotted some well dressed white folks being shown a house by a property manager, while a Latin woman, apparently the current actual RESIDENT looked on, somewhat stricken. I went up to the smiling well dressed looking buyer, who was oozing wealth and confidence. and said, "Thinking of buying the place?" He said yes. I pointed to the blue, spray painted 'XIII graffiti across the street and said, 'Well, you DO know what THAT means, right?' A small cloud Of worry crept across his face "No, uh, what does It mean?" "That," I lied, gravely, "means that someone was KILLED their on THAT VERY SPOT." The man now looked alarmed. I followed his widening eyes as he looked slowly around the street and saw that NEARLY EVERY AVAILABLE SURFACE ON THE ENTIRE BLOCK had XIII painted on it. As I walked away, I heard the property manager trying to reassure him, *Oh, I don't think it really means that..." but the house is still for sale, but I never saw THAT guy again - SEEN AROUND: Yuppie eradicator Nestor Mahkno was spotted at Hunt's the other night, with a crew of wide-eyed followers who were helping him put up his new posters. "Look" he gushed, holding up a bucket with an Ace hardware bag wrapped around it. "5 gallons of wheat-pastel." Some graffiti writers hanging out there groaned. but I h-

mored Nestor by lowering my voice- pointing at the 'Don't sell It here!' signs, and saying, 'Careful mam This place is UNDER SURVEILANE." Nestor nodded conspiratorially. "Ah... Gotcha" and split...

I'd like to close this column with some final remembrances of the idiosyncratic junkstore, Hauling, a store that was almost never open and had nothing for sale, but, nevertheless, seemed to be at the heart of a very public struggle, a fiercely independent determination to survive- Cheap John's terse dispatches, angrily taped to his bolted door, seemed like a mirror held up to the hard Tenderloin streets. The last one I remember, from last fall, was a xeroxed photo of John holding a kid, with the note in black marker, reading, "This is what they am trying to destroy!"

"He was actually a very sweet and open guy," says Chance Martin, editor of the Street Sheet- "Me and Mikey would always go smoke joints with him over by Angelo's garage. When he'd be real pissed, he'd lack himself in the store and you'd hear him playing his piano real loud in there. You should have seen that motorcycle he sold Mikey, though- Mikey took it to the Harley dealer and the guy said, "What?!? Did you buy this bike from a fuckin' TWEAKER or something ?!?"

Probably no one knew Cheap John better than Mikey We tried to get some stories from him, but, after 8 years living in the Senator on Ellis; and working at the Coalition On Homelessness, Mikey and his motorcycle moved to Hawaii, last Christmas. Repeated calls, postcards, and e-mails to his island address have gone unanswered

Write to the Turd Filled Donut at PO Box 40272, SF, CA 94140 (orders outside SF cost \$1)-great zine!



Elizabeth Gurley Flynn
The Rebel Girl
with son Fred 1911

American Hero
IWW, Organizer, a Red
1906 -1964
Autobiography available
from International Publishers



Voltairine de Cleyre
American Anarchist/Poet/IWW
1866-1912

"Written in red their protest stands,
For the Gods of the World to see
On the dooming wall their bodiless hands
Have blazoned "Upharsin,"
and flaring brands
Illumine the message: "Seize the lands!
Open the prisons and make men free!"
Flame out the living words of the dead
Written-in-red. "

Charles Kerr Publ Co has a small pamphlet of poems "Written in Red". Alexaner Berkman edited, (published by Mother Earth in 1914)" Voltairine de Cleyre: Selected Works" (can't find it!!)

FROM FAIR...THE 'LIBERAL PUNDITS'.....

Cokie Roberts

False Feathers: Curiously considered to represent a "liberal" viewpoint on This Week, perhaps because she's a woman in a men's club. She's also associated with National Public Radio, which itself has an undeserved leftish reputation.

True Colors: Roberts, (This Week, 10/16/92) objected -vehemently to the claim that Dukakis lost because of Bush campaign tactics, saying: "Michael Dukakis was totally out of the "mainstream" of the American public." On election night 1994 (ABC, 11/8/94), when Peter Jennings asked her to give advice to Bill Clinton in the wake of the Republican victory, her response was: "Move to the right, which is the advice that somebody should have given him a long time ago." In 1997 (This Week, 11/17/97), Roberts derided the congressional Democrats for opposing "fasttrack" trade legislation (overwhelmingly unpopular with the public): "The Democratic caucus in the House of Representatives is way to the left, far where the party is and where the public is."

In a column written during the 1997 UPS strike (Dallas Morning News, 8/8/97), Cokie Roberts and her pundit-husband Steve Roberts warned against stronger unions: "A \$20-an-hour job doesn't do any worker any good if the company loses business or closes down." Twenty dollars per hour equals roughly \$40,000 per year-----less than Cokie and her husband were paid for a single lecture to a Chicago bank (Chicago Tribune, 1/15/95).

Sam Donaldson

False Feathers: "Resident liberal" on ABC's This Week, according to the Washington Post (1/21/96).

True Colors: Donaldson is mostly seen as liberal because of his years of shouting inaudible questions at President Reagan. Hawkish on foreign policy, he used to refer to the Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachev as "a terrorist system" (This Week, 11/27/88) and to Nicaragua's elected President Daniel Ortega as "the Nicaraguan dictator" (This Week, 12/4/88).

Donaldson's no environmentalist, either: A big recipient of federal subsidies for his sheep ranch, he's received federal help to exterminate wildlife, authorizing leghold traps, neck snares, cyanide, aerial gunning and the killing of young in their dens to rid the ranch of coyotes, bobcats, mountain lions and black bears (Extra!, 5-6/97). Referring to the reintroduction of endangered species, he told David Letterman (11/28/95), "If they introduce the Mexican wolf, you'll never see a Mexican wolf on my ranch. You might see some newly spaded ground."

Michael Kinsley

False Feathers: For six years the host of Crossfire "from the left," the editor of Microsoft's online publication Slate has recently resumed playing the left role on the show as a substitute host.

True Colors: A self-described "wishy~washy moderate" (American Journalism Review, 1-2/96), Kinsley has acknowledged (Crossfire, 1/23/90) that "there is no way ... that I'm as far left as Pat Buchanan is right." He told Extra! (7-8/90), "Buchanan is clearly part of a movement-really, leader of a movement-in a way that I'm certainly not."

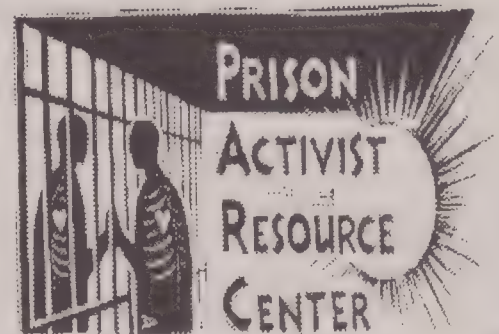
When Jerry Brown wasn't allowed on Crossfire because he insisted on giving out his 800 number for fundraising, Kinsley remarked (12/6/91): "Isn't Jerry Brown making a complete joke of himself, carrying on like this?" Four years later, when co-host Pat Buchanan announced his bid for the presidency on Crossfire, Kinsley helped him hold up a sign giving Buchanan's own 800 number (2/16/95). His support for "free trade" has led Kinsley to make nonsensical arguments, like the idea that workers in U.S.-owned plants in Mexico would be paid in dollars: "Those dollars are only good for one thing, which is buying stuff in the United States," he claimed (Crossfire, 9/14/93). When discussing the "various alternatives" for health care reform in The New Republic (12/13/93), he noted parenthetically that he would not address "the Canadian-style 'single-payer' option, which has few backers." At the time, a single-payer bill in Congress had 92 cosponsors-more than any other proposal-and the concept had majority support in public opinion polls.

John Stossel -ABC correspondent answering a suggestion that ABC News might put on someone with a countervailing point of view, he said "What's the countervailing point of view to Milton Friedman? He won the Nobel Prize for saying free markets make people richer. I mean, that's a controversial idea only in Cuba... But in general it's true."

Joseph Kahn in the NY Times "These days, it seems, only wild-eyed anarchists and Third World dictators believe capitalism is not the high road to a better life."

Willie Brown explaining his views on welfare reform, told Outlooks managing editor "I've never had the view that I should give people money. I resent that."

1997-14,449 quality of life citations issued in SF-
2,249 for camping, 8,612 for drinking in public, 773 after hours in parks, 260 for sleeping, 692 for obstruction. — Homeless/unemployed harassment — Who gives WHO money Mr. Millionaire politician??? And those are our tax dollars; it's not your money!



Prisoners' Support Project - PARC receives over 100 letters a month from prisoners. By corresponding with and mailing helpful resource packets to prisoners in need, we are able to fill a growing demand for assistance. We are also able to widely publicize prisoner's voices and help them give important direction and feedback to Our movements.

P.O. Box 339 Berkeley CA 94701 phone: 510/393-4648 fax: 510/893-4607 email: parc@prisonactivist.org web: www.prisonactivist.org

Issues Curriculum - Our Curriculum Project's death penalty slide show has been taught in Bay Area high schools in October and has been a huge success. All four Of Our Prison Issues Curricula (Death Penalty, Criminalization of Youth, Who's in Prison, and Prison Profits) will be ready for national distribution in the summer of 2001.

TWO EXCERPTS from
THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD by
Michael DeCapite

Meanwhile Ed was on a roll. He caught me in the yard mid-afternoon.

"I hit Feef again last night: that's four nights in a row! I've taken him for over a grand in the past week and filtered eight eighty-two of it back out for bills. I paid fucking Jones, the IRS, Master and Visa, Roy...I hit him last night I paid the electricity, the phone, paid Mandy at the bar fifty I owed her, I got Wade's hundred here... Man I been hitting him good, too: he's getting grouchier and grouchier. All the penny candy's up to two cents. I bet the Oakland game today, three o'clock. One-fifty flat, so I got something to listen to this afternoon---"

He caught himself and looked at me.

Said "Nah, I'm just bullshitting you, I didn't hit him again---You kidding? I finally hit the skids."

"[laughter] Did you hit him or not?"

"Naw, no way; that'd be impossible."

"I wasn't gonna ask you for nothing."

He tilted his head back, laughing. It was good to see him laugh.

"Yeah, I did hit him. Four fucking days in a row---I'm rolling! You need ten? What're we up to now, three-sixty?"

"Three-sixty, yeah. No, I don't need any."

"You want another ten? I know you gotta be broke..."

"Yeah, y'know, uh..."

"You want twenty? I can tell I ain't never gonna see this money again, it's past the point---"

"You got a fin?"

"I can give you twenty-five---"

"No, five's good. Any more than that I won't go to work tonight."

"Here."

"Thanks."

"I got a steak in the freezer, if you want half for dinner."

"Yeah, alright."

"You gotta cook it though. I got a couple tomatoes, half a cucumber...you can cook it up there and bring it over. I don't wanna eat in your place. I feel trapped in there."

"Yeah, so do I. I'll see you in a while."

* * * *

Stop at Ed's to pick up the steak, he's pacing the kitchen.

"I'm losing this fucking Oakland game---I finally did it. Oakland ain't done a fucking thing the whole game. I hadda do it: I hadda break the streak. Two hundred, I bet on 'em."

"Thought you bet one-fifty."

"Aah I took a shot...two hundred, and I bet eighty-tonight on a two-teamer. There's no way I'm gonna pull this one out."

"I'll be back."

* * * *

Eating steak.

"Man, I can't believe I hit that game. Really Danny: I must be blessed. Losing three to nothing the whole game, I finally shut it off---Turn it back on just in time to hear 'em smack one over the wall with bases loaded. Incredible! I can't do any-thing wrong! I'm fucking blessed! I can feel a halo around my head!"

* * * *

Later Mr. Jim called.

"I got something for you, if you want it..."

"Alright. What is it?"

"Place on Solon Road called Trans-Border."

"Trans-Border? I love to travel---what're they doing, running guns?"

"They make coffeepots."

Off the freeway the night thickens, time closes in. Slipping skeins of mist on a backroad...clinging to the windshield, floating past... I almost miss the place in the dark, in the dew...surrounded by trees... Get there 11:00.

I walk in, it's just a little place, the usual dim greenish light, big fans blowing---

I get punched in the arm. It's a miniature woman with a giant pushbroom, looking up at me. She has a fierce gleam in her eyes, like she might want to play.

"HA! Where'd they find you?"

"Where'd they find me?"

"Someone with a haircut!"

She pushes her broom away, cackling.

In the office three guys are lounging around scratching their beards. One's behind a desk, the other two are against the walls. One of them is walleyed. They're looking at me like trespassing is a serious matter in these parts. They might be dangerous when sober.

"I'm from Hours," I tell the guy behind the desk.

"I'm from Mount Nebo West Virginia," he says.

We're watching each other, waiting. I nod and smile. A couple of seconds go by. He drums his fingers on the desk.

He says "You be out there, machine with that fucking Porterrican."

One of the others pipes up, says "He ain't no Porterrican, he's Niggeraguan, 'r some shit."

Out the office window, a tall dark man is wiping his brow. He looks worried. He stuffs a white hanky into a back pocket and turns away.

"Picked him out right away, didn't ye?" says the guy behind the desk.

I get a strange sense of deja vu. Not like this's happened to me, but like it's been happening to someone else, maybe some one different every night for a long time...

I approach the Nicaraguan who's finishing his shift at a big green machine. He seems not right for this place, like he was a respected person elsewhere, educated at least, maybe even famous in a small way. Busily working, he explains what I'll be doing. The machine molds plastic trays for coffee-makers. It tips them out in pairs connected by a stem. Every thirty seconds he opens the sliding door, takes out the pair, cuts them apart and slips them into a bag. Takes twenty-five seconds; fivesconds to kill inbetween.

He steps back, tells me to give it a try.

I hop in, pull out the newborn pair, I'm fumbling with the razor to cut them apart...

Solemnly, he watches me. I turn to open the door...

It's easy enough, I get the hang of it, I'm working away.

I relax into an easy accommodation of the pace, but he says "Open door immediately! Close door immediately!"

A wee woman, different than the first, pushes by with a broom and says "Don't worry. I'll keep an eye on him."

When he sees I've got it he turns to go, he's in a hurry.

"Hey, uh---How do I turn the machine off?"

"Off?"

"Yeah, how do I turn it off?"

"Turn off?"

"Yeah, y'know in case I gotta take a piss, or I drop something I gotta stop to---"

"Stop?"

"Yeah: Stop."

"NO turn off! Machine don't stop! You call the foreman he take over---machine don't stop! Breaktime ten minutes one o'clock and five o'clock, lunch half hour three o'clock."

And he disappears---makes his escape, strands me there. A little woman pushes a broom by, alert...

On the table is a clock-radio. Beat-up and half melted, blaring an AM station. Open the door, close the door, nick the two pieces apart. You've got to pace yourself for these factory nights, protect your energy, keep your detachment. The songs on the radio are a threat---they're bad enough in broad daylight---at this hour they get under your skin, make you irritable, sick. It's a battle between me and the radio. I try to not pay attention, block it out. Keep moving. Why take it so seriously? Stupid songs on the radio, who cares? Don't think, keep working, be automatic.

There's a radio at each machine, tuned to the same station.

Then the commercials come barging in---they up the ante---frenzied---one after another---five in a row---each one louder than the last---more hysterical---scenarios, jingles---boastfully moronic---pleading---outdoing each other---building toward a crescendo. And it doesn't stop there. They keep coming. Another five---twelve in a row...

A few more songs, terrible songs, embarrassingly familiar, they drain you a little more, and then the commercials come streamrolling in again. You look to the dim fluorescent heavens---one!---three, five!---more! A symphony of lies! You slip into a crack between what you're hearing and where you are in the roaring factory night. A dozen commercials---one more for good measure. Your soul squirms there---exposed---irradiated! Forty-five minutes of this, no end in sight.

...Put two trays in a bag and reach for the radio---two more trays are pushing out, so I grab them, clip them apart, bag them, and hit the radio's off-switch. Doesn't work. Two more trays are coming---I take care of them---hit the AM/FM switch: doesn't work. Grab the trays coming out---fix them up---reach for the tuning dial: it's broken off. Grab two more trays---clip them, bag them---flip the radio over, no other controls. SON OF A BITCH! Now I'm pissed. I let the machine go and walk around to pull the plug.

The machine jams. Overloads! Bells ringing, lights flashing---a buzzer goes off---a plant-wide siren sounds---three toy women start sweeping in tight circles, the office door bangs open---foreman comes running with a wrench, there's white plastic oozing from the machine...

Anyway, I shut the radio down.

.....Back to rhythm, working along fine. I steal glances, try to get a bigger picture. All around the place are these long green machines,

a person locked into each of them. At the end of---whoops: two more trays--- At the end of each machine is a big nozzle stuck into a cardboard box. That's the plastic. The machine sucks it up and melts it down and out come the trays and the whole process keeps going...

* * * *

Behind me is a wall of boxes, up to the ceiling almost...two more trays... And then I see him up there: a guy with a beard! Hiding up there---peering over the boxes. Watching us! Watching me!

* * * *

On the table is a drawing. Just a few red lines. Two parentheses with a Y inbetween. A pussy. Someone before me has managed between trays to scrawl a tiny cunt---No head, no arms, legs... Exactly enough lines to express an idea, with a dot for a bellybutton. Was it the Nicaraguan? A functional drawing. The functions being protest and hope.

* * * *

There was a big clock on the far wall. Someone's idea of a sick joke. Pretty soon I was checking it every two minutes. My body worked apart from my mind. I'd blown my wad early and now I was loose in time...a spirit...prey to every thought, lost in memories...upheavals, recriminations...haunting sorrows...fantasies...falling toward dawn without really believing it could ever be...like playing the lottery...

Now and then I'd zoom back into flesh and look around. A faucet dripping inside me. Wide awake at the wrong hour, and the trays kept coming.

* * * *

At lunchtime I found a Racing Form in the breakroom and picked out a double and a quinella at Thistle-down for later. Wrote the bets on a slip of paper.

And then dropped the slip in front of a broom on my way back to the machine.

* * * *

When I picked up my check for \$24 in the morning the sky was blue, the sun was bright. I felt like an animal. I went to bed.

I woke with a headache a few hours later, wondering where Jim would send me tonight. The weather was still perfect.

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Rattlesnake#1-page 59

more from....**THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD**

Michael DeCapite

Al called one morning and said he'd seen a Help Wanted sign in a porno shop window on 185th Street. I drove out there.

The manager was an odd clean-cut guy with a head like a balloon that tagged and loomed from a skinny neck. He was behind a glass case built on a platform. I filled out an application. The case displayed rubbers and handcuffs, colored oils and creams...novelty items like cigarette lighters, decks of cards, wind-up toys...

He looked the application over and said I'd have to take a lie-detector test. He asked if I had any objection to that. I said I didn't, and he said he'd call me to set up an appointment. I bought a pack of cigarettes, took a book of girlie matches from the counter and drove home.

The next day he called to ask whether Friday morning at nine would be okay. He gave me directions to a place about forty miles east and said he'd call again with the results of the test.

* * * *

Going to work Thursday night was the last thing I wanted to do, but going to work any night was the last thing I wanted to do, and seven bucks was what I had in my pocket, and what I had in my pocket was all I had anywhere, so... So I spent a buck on two lottery tickets as a final stab of hope before calling Mr. Jim, and went to the Greeks to eat dinner and watch the number come in.

7:30 rolled around and I was wiping my plate with a piece of bread, talking to Nick Stavros. The girl in the bikini came on---I had 946. As she was explaining the rules and procedures of the Ohio State Lottery Commission I was doing some arithmetic: 250 for the straight price, plus 42 for the box is 292, minus 2 for lottery tickets tomorrow, minus 100 toward what I owe Ed is 190, minus 25 for the phone and 15 for the electricity is 150 minus 10 for the gas company is 140 minus 20 to fill the tank is 120, minus 50 for Visa and 50 for Sears is 20 bucks, minus 30 for groceries is---whoa, waitaminute...Make that 50 for Ed, after groceries leaves 40, minus say 50 for Lige to fix the carburetor, aah shit. Luckily, the number came 011. Walking down Fairfield I was thinking 7 minus a buck for the tickets and 3 for dinner is 3, minus 3 for gas to get to wherever Jim sends me...

I knocked on Mr. Jim's door. From inside came the buzz of his tattoo needle. There was a sort of random crashing and banging toward the door, and then he was there in the flesh, wiping blood off his forearm and swaying forward from the unlit kitchen...

"How you doing, Jim?"

"Marvelous!"

"You uh...You going in tonight?"

"Oh yeah! You looking to work?"

"Yeah, I dunno. Anything at Yellow Freight?"

"No! ...No... Sorry, man...They got all they need. But I'll see if I can find you something; You be home?"

"Yeah."

"I'll give you a call, something comes up."

"Okay. Thanks."

By 9:30 I was struggling to keep awake. Usually he called by 10:30.

10:30 crept up like the climb to the top of a rollercoaster and hung there.

10:35 I was on my way to the kitchen to light a candle of thanks to the Patron Saint of Idleness when the phone spun me around

in my tracks:

"RAT-BASTARD MOTHERFUCKER---/ Yeah?"

"Danny?"

"Hi Jim."

"Look I got something at this foundry, Lloyd & Turpin. The regular guy called in sick. You interested?"

"Yeah, okay."

"It's out toward Eastlake, right off Route 2---"

I scraped up some loose change, coasted on fumes into the downtown Shell and put my last three bucks in the gas tank. That left half a buck in case Lloyd & Turpin had a coffee machine. I hit the freeway, tired of living like a trapeze artist.

11:30 I pulled into the gravel lot and parked. The other cars were old...even more beat-up than mine...like dusty shadows...the suggestions of shapes... The atmosphere was dense and motionless, down here near the bottom of night. One sodium light threw down...

It's only eight hours, I told myself.

Inside, I couldn't find anyone to whom I could give my time slip. No one in sight. The place was full of a roaring, pounding silence that was not, of course, the absence of sound, but the absence of any progression or modulation or resolution of sound: like a black hole of sound. The only light was indirect: filtered through office glass...bounced off a coffee machine...resting in a timeclock...dying off an intermittent flame, from around a corner... There was an area of this secondhand light for fifteen or twenty yards, beyond which was a labyrinth, composed of different densities of shadow.

---Movement from behind a huge machine.

I worked my way over and he showed me to someone else who took my time slip and led me into the dark.

I followed him to a place between two machines which because of their size and weight and blackness could not be glimpsed whole, but only as abstractions, ideas. They didn't seem to be in operation. As though they had served some massive function once, dimly remembered now---the function as lost in blackness as the climbing tangled extremities of the machines themselves... He stationed me in front of two iron troughs, one empty, the other loaded with steel nuts. He handed me a shovel and yelled that I should scoop the nuts from the full trough into the empty one. He said I should keep an eye out for nuts of irregular size and drop them into an empty oil drum. He said it like an afterthought and went away.

I stabbed the shovel into the full trough. It was like stabbing a shovel into pavement. I tried again. The nuts were a solid mass: I couldn't get one of them onto the shovel. I tried for five minutes, embarrassed in case anyone was watching, and starting to sweat, and met with the same response. My arms were ringing.

The foreman came back and took the shovel. He placed one foot on the edge of the trough and stabbed. He got a corner of the shovel down along the slanted inside of the trough and worked it deeper and then, stepping down and using the rim as a fulcrum, brought the shovel up, laden with nuts. He sorted through them with a gloved hand, dumped them into the empty trough and handed me the shovel.

An hour later the palms of my workgloves were in tat-

ters from shorting across the shovelfull of nuts, and one trough had been emptied into the other. I hadn't found an irregular nut. I stood back and leaned on the shovel and took a breath.

A guy drove up and slid the forks of a towmotor under the full trough, lifted it and took it away.

In a minute he was back with another trough suspended on the forks. He set it down.

It was filled with nuts.

I looked around, expecting to find a circle of laughing men enjoying this, but there was only offhand light and pounding and smoke. I dug in.

My neck and shoulders ached. My lower back tingled with a kind of imminent weakness and I was wrapped in sweat. I cursed myself for being weak and unprepared...for being a smoker...

I stopped more often now to straighten up and stretch and catch my breath. Once in a while a human form would pass...pushing something...or pulling...like an unformed thought...dark, and without features...covered in smoke...

I finished the second trough and the palms of my workgloves were nothing but strings; my palms were oiled and bloody. My friend on the forklift took the full trough away...and brought a third. I might have laughed...I don't remember...

It wasn't just that the work was hard, but that the work was meaningless: without purpose or end...

I pulled a bandana from my pocket and tied it around the palm of my left hand.

As I stabbed into the third trough my muscles felt like rotten snakemeat. I wondered how the regular guy did it every night. And then I thought---Maybe there isn't a regular guy! Maybe they get a new guy every night---And then just pile the bodies of the dead outside! Mr. Jim is in on this! Maybe he and the foreman split the guy's pay every night---be 12 bucks each...Who would know? The guys who do this work are total outsiders anyway--- Oh, shit---Why didn't I leave a note?

...24 bucks...but I was a half-hour late---after taxes that'll be 21, 22 maybe and change, and they keep the change at the bar for cashing the check...22 even, minus 2 for lottery tickets, minus 5 at least for gas is 15, minus 5 for eggs and bread and something for dinner is 10, minus 10 towards the electricity...

My raging mind got me through the third trough...I was kind of stumbling in place, waiting for the fourth. The guy brought it and began to set it down---on my foot--- I woke up and roared until he lifted it and pulled back and set it down again...

I'd dropped a total of seven irregular nuts into the barrel. I decided not to look for more. Thereby depriving the work of any shred of meaning. I tried to rev my thoughts again, but twenty bucks wasn't enough to keep me occupied with subtraction even if I divided it into nickels. I tried adding up five days' pay and starting down from there, but all that did was extend the hopelessness of the moment a week into the future. The fourth trough took forever.

And then the foreman came and led me toward something else.

I followed him, looking for an escape route, through giant pistons plunging through the floor and roof...past pits of flame...vast machines that began and ended in blackness...conveyors...here and there a lost soul, hunched over, stranded in the boiler room of night...every surface thick with a permanent layer of soot, a burnt fallout, like what was left of time when time crossed over into whatever this was... The place was one big cave-lit chiaroscuro of forms suggesting themselves

through dead veils of smoke. I lost him for a minute down a tunnel of pipes and furnaces and rusted wheels... He came back and steered me away from the edge of a grease pit, and I stayed on his heels from then on...

We found our way to a clearing lit by a cauldron of flames. A man in goggles and elbow gloves was guiding a mechanical arm which dipped racks of metal plates into the flames and lifted them out again. The foreman stationed me with my back to the cauldron, across an empty rack from an old guy, and went away.

Beside us were barrels of the metal plates. The plates looked like telephone dials. I never found out what they were---the old guy had no idea. He'd been there ten years. It was our job to hang them on the racks. When a rack was full, one of us would wheel it over to the man at the cauldron. When the newly-dipped pieces had cooled and dried, we'd take them off the rack and toss them into other barrels. There was nothing to it.

Nothing at all.

1 dial...2...3...4...

...clink...clink...

33...34...35...

...209...210...

There was a clock on the wall. I tried not to look at it, but there it was with every piece...

Each minute was longer than the last.

2:39... 2:39... 2:39... 2:40...

...2:40... 2:40... 2:41...

I tried to speed up.

The old guy shook his head and laughed to himself. He said "Ain't no use to hurrying...Always more where these came from. And seven-thirty don't come till seven-thirty."

He had his back to the clock.

I guess after ten years they let you stand with your back to the clock.

And each minute was longer than the past. After sixty minutes I'd gladly have gone back to shoveling nuts. ...drip... drip... drip... drip...

By the end of two hours this work was torture.

There was an open door. It had been seducing my glance with clockwork regularity. Finally, I had to stop for a minute: my arms were working independent of my will. I walked to the door and stepped outside, expecting some kind of difference.

The night outside was just as dead.

...4:38...4:39...4:40...4:41...4:42...

2... 4...

I found a water fountain, splashed water on my face...went back to the open door...back to the rack...

Somewhere in there we broke for lunch. I sat on a bench in the lockerroom with a couple guys...no one spoke. I got a coffee from the machine and smoked a cigarette, treasuring every movement that differed from the one simple, maddening motion involved in hanging those pieces. My hands were shaking. I took deep slow breaths, trying to relax...trying to hang onto this time in the lockerroom.

Lunch was over as soon as it started.

I went back to the rack and started hanging dials.

There was no way to attack this work: it was practically intangible...through long elastic minutes...piece after piece...the same slight, barely perceptible gesture...after piece after piece after piece...I tried everything: I switched to my left hand, I used both hands at once, as the old man laughed and shook his head because I obviously had no idea how to pace myself for a ten-year stretch...each minute a deep rubbery maze, with something building inside my chest...after piece after piece after piece...as the seconds and minutes groaned and stretched until they lightly snapped, and floated, dancing, loose within their hours, and I felt like I was drowning---

The old guy worked on, delicately, uncomplaining, at a pace that never varied. He was impervious to this---past it---and of course unaware of the exponentially replicating helix of tension and denial and outrage and violence and resolve and despair my sweating mind was putting me through---

With an hour and a half to go, I had the physical sensation of my mind beginning to tilt, like a carnival ride: my blood was boiling up my throat into a roar---

I walked outside and looked at the sky for some vestige of detachment and swore I'd never spend another night like this.

Somehow I finished the shift. Found the foreman at 7:30 and got him to sign my slip.

Morning outside was heavy and white.

* * * *

I had enough gas to make it to the polygraph test, but not enough to make it back.

I stopped at my folks' place.

My mother was gone to work, my father was stirring about his morning routine. I sat at the kitchen table, streaked with grease and unable to talk about the night just ended, while he fried me a couple eggs. I washed up a little, borrowed a fresh t-shirt and ate the eggs. I swallowed some coffee, he slipped me a ten, and I drove out to the place.

There was a panelled waitingroom with diplomas and clippings and photos and letters of thanks on the walls. A woman handed me a stapled sheaf of papers: a questionnaire. The store manager had emphasized that no matter what, I shouldn't lie on the test. Every conceivable question: Have you ever disappointed a friend? Are you ever lonely? Depressed? Have you ever considered suicide? Have you ever had transactions with a book-maker? I answered with exclamation points across the board. Then there was a chart with open boxes: Please list any drugs or chemical substances you have ingested for other than medicinal purposes. I drew extra boxes. Then they said When was the last time you stole from an employer? I said Last time I worked for a bookstore.

I handed the papers to the woman and she gave them to the interviewer, who led me to a back office.

He attached electrodes to my wrists and chest, and then we went over the questionnaire.

When the test was over he wished me luck, but gave no indication of the results.

I stopped at a gas station and put my father's ten in the tank and hit the freeway.

Stopped at Hours for my check, cashed it at the Empire, drank a shot of whiskey and then drove home, pulled the shades and put myself to bed.

12:30 the phone.

"Danny?" It was the store manager.

"Yeah?"

"Well, I have the results of your test, and---It looks like you're the man for the job."

I might have laughed...I don't remember.

"Can you start tonight, eleven o'clock? There'll be a man here to train you."

"Yeah. Sure."

"Great."

"Yeah... Thanks."

(Through The Windshield is one of the best real life'' fiction' novels I've read from the 80's. Write him, it's self-published-at 2822 Folsom San Francisco,CA 94110-\$14--or email at mdecapite@earthlink.net)

BRIDGE OF COURAGE

Life Stories of the Guatemalan
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by Jennifer Harbury

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Common Courage Press \$14.95

See excerpts starting page 81

Except from Left Business Observer#61 (December 1993),written by Doug Henwood, editor and publisher.

Who's poor?

....At first glance, it's extraordinary that a relatively small portion of public spending is such a hot matter -- \$24 billion a year spent on the principal welfare program, AFDC, is what the government pays in interest to its creditors every six weeks, or what the Pentagon spews in four. This isn't how the public sees things. A 1992 survey by Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting asked citizens which of three functions the government spent the most money on; 42% picked foreign aid, 30%, welfare, and 22% the military -- **an exact inversion of reality....**" (thanks to our politicians and media!)

-see full text on LBO's website...

NICKEL-AND-DIMED

On (not) getting by in America

by **Barbara Ehrenreich**

(reprinted from Harper's Jan 1999)

At the beginning of June 1998 I leave behind everything that nor, malty soothes the ego and sustains the body-home, career, companion, reputation, ATM card-for a plunge into the low-wage workforce. There, I become another, occupationally much diminished "Barbara Ehrenreich"—depicted on job-application forms as a divorced homemaker whose sole work experience consists of house-keeping in a few private homes. I am terrified, at the beginning, of being unmasked for, what I am: a middle-class journalist setting out to explore the world that welfare mothers are entering, at the rate of approximately 50,000 a month, as welfare reform kicks in'. Happily, though, my fears turn out to be entirely unwarranted: during a month of poverty and toil, my name goes unnoticed and for the most part unuttered. In this parallel universe where my father never got out of the mines and I never got through college, I am "baby," "honey," "blondie," and, most commonly, "girl."

My first task is to find a place to live. I figure that if I can earn \$7 an hour—which, from the want ads, seems doable—I can afford to spend \$500 on rent, or maybe, with severe economies, \$600. In the Key West area, where I live, this pretty much confines me to flophouses and trailer homes like the one, a pleasing fifteen-minute drive from town, that has no airconditioning, no screens, no fans, no television, and, by way of diversion, only the challenge of evading the landlord's Doberman pinscher. The big problem with this place, though, is the rent, which at \$675 a month is well beyond my reach. All right, Key West is expensive. But so is New York City, or the Bay Area, or Jackson Hole, or Telluride, or Boston, or, any other place where tourists and the wealthy compete for living space with the people who clean their toilets and fry their hash browns. I still, it is a shock to realize that "trailer trash" has become, for me, a demographic category to aspire to.

So I decide to make the common tradeoff between affordability and convenience, and go for a \$500-a-month efficiency thirty miles up a two, lane highway from the employment opportunities of Key West, meaning forty, five minutes if there's no road construction and I don't get caught behind.

According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the "fair-market rent" for an efficiency is \$551 here in Monroe County, Florida. A comparable rent in the five boroughs of New York City is \$704; in San Francisco, \$713; and in the heart of Silicon Valley, \$808. The fair-market rent for an area is defined as the amount that would be needed to pay rent plus utilities for "privately owned, decent, safe, and sanitary rental housing of a modest (non-luxury) nature with suitable amenities." Some sun-dazed Canadian tourists. I hate the drive, along a roadside studded with white crosses commemorating the more effective head-on collisions, but it's a sweet little place—a cabin, more or less, set in the swampy back yard of the converted mobile home where my landlord, an affable TV repairman, lives with his bartender girl friend. Anthropologically speaking, a bustling trailer park would be preferable, but here I have a gleaming white floor and a firm mattress, and the few resident bugs are easily vanquished.

Besides, I am not doing this for the anthropology. My aim is nothing so mistily subjective as to "experience poverty" or find out how it "really feels" to be a long-term low-wage worker. I've had enough unchosen encounters with poverty and the world of low-wage work to know it's not a place you want to visit for touristic purposes; it just smells too much like fear. And with all my real-life assets—bank account, IRA, health insurance, multiroom home—waiting indulgently in the background, I am, of course, thoroughly insulated from the terrors that afflict the genuinely poor.

No, this is a purely objective, scientific sort of mission. The humanitarian rationale for welfare reform—as opposed to the more punitive and stingy impulses that may actually have motivated it—is that work will lift, poor women out of poverty while simultaneously inflating their self-esteem and hence their future value in the labor market. Thus, whatever the hassles involved in finding childcare, transportation, etc., the transition from welfare to work will end happily, in greater prosperity for all. Now there are many problems with this comforting prediction, such as the fact that the economy will inevitably undergo a downturn, eliminating many jobs. Even without a downturn, the influx of a million former welfare recipients into the low-wage labor market could depress wages by as much as 11.9 percent, according to the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) in Washington, D.C.

But is it really possible to make a living on the kinds of jobs currently available to unskilled people? Mathematically, the answer is no, as can be shown by taking \$6 to \$7 an hour, perhaps subtracting a dollar or two an hour for child care, multiplying by 160 hours a month, and comparing the result to the prevailing rents. According to the National Coalition for the Homeless, for example, in 1998 it took, on average nationwide, an hourly wage of \$8.89 to afford a one bedroom apartment, and the Preamble Center for Public Policy estimates that the odds against a typical welfare recipient's landing a job at such a "living wage" are about 97 to 1. If these numbers are right, low-wage work is not a solution to poverty and possibly not even to homelessness.

It may seem excessive to put this proposition to an experimental test. As certain family members keep unhelpfully reminding me, the viability of low-wage work could be tested, after a fashion, without ever leaving my study. I could just pay myself \$7 an hour for eight hours a day, charge myself for room and board, and total up the numbers after a month. Why leave the people and work that I love? But I am an experimental scientist by training. In that business, you don't just sit at a desk and theorize; you plunge into the everyday chaos of nature, where surprises lurk in the most mundane measurements. Maybe, when I got into it, I would discover some hidden economies in the world of the low-wage worker. After all, if 30 percent of the workforce toils for less than \$8 an hour, according to the EPI, they may have found some tricks as yet unknown to me. Maybe—who knows?—I would even be able to detect in myself the bracing psychological effects of getting out of the house, as promised by the welfare wonks at places like the Heritage Foundation. Or, on the other hand, maybe there would be unexpected costs—physical, mental, or financial—to throw off all my calculations. Ideally, I should do this with two small children in tow, that being the welfare average, but mine are grown and no one is willing to lend me theirs for a month-long vacation in penury. So this is not the perfect experiment, just a test of the best possible case: an unencumbered woman, smart and even strong, attempting to live more or less off the land.

On the morning of my first full day of job searching, I take a red pen to the want ads, which are auspiciously numerous.

Everyone in Key West's booming "hospitality industry" seems to be looking for someone like me—trainable, flexible, and with suitably humble expectations as to pay. I know I possess certain traits that might be advantageous—I'm white and, I like to think, well-spoken and poised—but I decide on two rules: One, I cannot use any skills derived from my education or usual work—not that there are a lot of want ads for satirical essayists anyway. Two, I have to take the best paid job that is offered me and of course do my best to hold it; no Marxist rants or sneaking off to read novels in the ladies' room. In addition, I rule out various occupations for one reason or another: Hotel front desk clerk, for example, which to my surprise is regarded as unskilled and pays around \$7 an hour, gets eliminated because it involves standing in one spot for eight hours a day. Waitressing is similarly something I'd like to avoid, because I remember it leaving me bone tired when I was eighteen, and I'm decades of varicosities and back pain beyond that now. Telemarketing, one of the first refuges of the suddenly indigent, can be dismissed on grounds of personality. This leaves certain supermarket jobs, such as deli clerk, or housekeeping in Key West's thousands of hotel and guest rooms. House-keeping is especially appealing, for reasons both atavistic and practical: it's what my mother did before I came along, and it can't be too different from what I've been doing part-time, in my own home, all my life.

So I put on what I take to be a respectful, looking-outfit of ironed Bermuda shorts and scooped-neck T-shirt and set out for a tour of the local hotels and supermarkets. Best Western, Econo Lodge, and HoJo's all let me fill out application forms, and these are, to my relief, interested in little more than whether I am a legal resident of the United States and have committed any felonies. My next stop is WinnDixie, the supermarket, which turns out to have a particularly onerous application process, featuring a fifteen-minute "interview" by computer since, apparently, no human on the premises is deemed capable of representing the corporate point of view. I am conducted to a large room decorated with posters illustrating how to look "professional" (it helps to be white and, if female, permed) and warning of the slick promises that union organizers might try to tempt me with. The interview is multiple choice: Do I have anything, such as childcare problems, that might make it hard for me to get to work on time? Do I think safety on the job is the responsibility of management? Then, popping up cunningly out of the blue: How many dollars' worth of stolen goods have I purchased in the last year? Would I turn in a fellow employee if I caught him stealing? Finally, "Are you an honest person?"

Apparently, I ace the interview, because I am told that all I have to do is show up in some doctor's office tomorrow for a urine test. This seems to be a fairly general rule— if you want to stack Cheerio boxes or vacuum hotel rooms in chemically fascist America, you have to be willing to squat down and pee in front of some health worker (who has no doubt had to do the same thing herself). The wages WinnDixie is offering—\$6 and a couple of dimes to start with—are not enough, I decide, to compensate for this indignity.

I lunch at Wendy's, where \$4.99 gets you unlimited refills at the Mexican part of the Superbar, a comforting surfeit of refried beans and "cheese sauce." A teenage employee, seeing me studying the want ads, kindly offers me an application form, which I fill out, though here, too, the pay is just \$6 and change an hour. Then it's off for a round of the locally owned inns and guesthouses. At "The Palms," let's call it, a bouncy manager actually takes me around to see the rooms and meet the existing housekeepers, who, I note with satisfaction, look pretty much like me—faded ex-hippie types in shorts with long hair pulled back in braids. Mostly, though, no one speaks to

me or even looks at me except to proffer an application form. At my last stop, a palatial B&B, I wait twenty minutes to meet "Max," only to be told that there are no jobs now but there should be one soon, since "nobody lasts more than a couple weeks." (Because none of the people I talked to knew I was a -reporter, I have changed their names to protect their privacy and, in some cases perhaps, their jobs.)

Three days go by like this, and, to my chagrin, no one out of the approximately twenty places I've applied calls me for an interview. I had been vain enough to worry about coming across as too educated for the jobs I sought, but no one even seems interested in finding out how over-qualified I am. Only later will I realize that the want ads are not a reliable measure of the actual jobs available at any particular time. They are, as I should have guessed from Max's comment, the employers' insurance policy against the relentless turnover of the low-wage workforce. Most of the big hotels run ads almost continually, just to build a supply of applicants to replace the current workers as they drift away or are fired, so finding a job is just a matter of being at the right place at the right time and flexible enough to take whatever is, being offered that day. This finally happens to me at a one of the big discount hotel chains, where I go, as usual, for housekeeping and am sent, instead, to try out as a waitress at the attached "family restaurant," a dismal spot with a counter and about thirty tables that looks out on a parking garage and features such tempting 6re as "Polish [sic] sausage and BBQ sauce" on 95-degree days. Phillip, the dapper young West Indian who introduces himself as the manager, interviews me with about as much enthusiasm as if he were a clerk processing me for Medicare, the principal questions being what shifts can I work and when can I start. I mutter something about being woefully out of practice as a waitress, but he's already on to the uniform: I'm ~o show up tomorrow wearing black slacks and black shoes; he'll provide the rust colored polo shirt with HEARTHSIDE embroidered on it, though I might want to wear my own shirt to get to work, ha ha. At the word "tomorrow," something between fear and indignation rises in my chest. I want to say, "Thank you for your time, sit, but this is just an experiment, you know, not my actual life."

So begins my career at the Hearthside, I shall call it, one small profit center within a global discount hotel chain, where for two weeks I work from 2:00 till 10:00 P.M. for \$2.43 an hour plus tips. In some futile bid for gentility, the management has barred employees from using the front door, so my first day I enter through the kitchen, where a red-faced man with shoulder-length blond hair is throwing frozen steaks against the wall and yelling, "Fuck this shit!" "That's just Jack," explains Gail, the wiry middle-aged waitress who is assigned to train me. "He's on the rag again"—a condition occasioned, in this instance, by the fact, that the cook on the morning shift had forgotten to thaw out the steaks. For the next eight hours, I run after the agile Gail, absorbing bits of instruction along with fragments of personal tragedy. All food must be trayed, and the reason she's so tired today is that she woke up in a cold sweat thinking of her boyfriend, who killed himself recently in an upstate prison. No refills on lemonade. And the reason he was in prison is that a few DULs caught up with him, that's all, could have happened to anyone. Carry the creamers to the table in a monkey bowl, never in your hand. And after he was gone she spent

several months living in her truck, peeing in a plastic pee bottle and reading by candlelight at night, but you can't live in a truck in the summer, since you need to have the windows down, which means anything can get in, from mosquitoes on up.

At least Gail puts to rest any fears I had of appearing overqualified. From the first day on, I find that of all the things I have left behind, such as home and identity, what I miss the most is competence. Not that I have ever felt utterly competent in the writing business, in which one day's success augurs nothing at all for the next. But in my writing life, I at least have some notion of procedure: do the research, make the outline, rough out a draft, etc. As a server, though, I am beset by requests like bees; more iced tea here, ketchup over there, a togo box for table fourteen, and where are the high chairs, anyway? Of the twentyseven tables, up to six are usually mine at any time, though on slow after-hours or if Gail is off, I sometimes have the whole place to myself. There is the touch-screen computer-ordering system to master, which is, I suppose, meant to minimize server-cook contact, but in practice requires constant verbal fine tuning: "That's gravy on the mashed, okay? None on the meatloaf," and so forth-while the cook scowls as if I were inventing these refinements just to torment him. Plus, something I had forgotten in the years since I was eighteen: about a third of a server's job is "side work" that's invisible to customers--sweeping, scrubbing, slicing, refilling, and restocking. If it isn't all done, every little bit of it, you're going to face the 6:00 Pm. dinner rush defenseless and probably go down in flames. I screw up dozens of times at the beginning, sustained in my shame entirely by Gail's support--1t's okay, baby, every. one does that sometime"--because, to my total surprise and despite the scientific detachment I am doing my best to maintain, I care.

The whole thing would be a lot easier if I could just skate through it as Lily Tomlin in one of her waitress skits, but I was raised by the absurd Booker T. Washingtonian precept that says: If you're going to do something, do it well. In fact, "well" isn't good enough by half. Do it better than any, one has ever done it before. Or so said my father, who must have known what he was talking, about because he managed to pull himself, and us with him, up from the mile-deep copper mines of Butte to the leafy suburbs of the Northeast, ascending from boilermakers to martinis before booze beat out ambition. As in most endeavors I have encountered in my life, doing it "better than anyone" is not a reasonable goal. Still, when I wake up at 4:00 A.M. in my own cold sweat, I am not thinking about the, writing deadlines I'm neglecting; I'm thinking about the table whose order I screwed up so that one of the boys didn't get, his kiddie meal until the rest of the family had moved on to their Key Lime pies. That's the other powerful motivation I hadn't expected-the customers, or "patients," as I can't help thinking of them on account of the mysterious vulnerability that seems to have left them temporarily unable to feed themselves. After a few days at the Hearthside, I feel the service ethic kick in like a shot of oxytocin, the nurturance hormone. The plurality of my customers are hard-working locals truck drivers, construction workers, even house, keepers from the attached hotel-and I want them to have the closest to a "fine dining" experience that the grubby circumstances will allow. No "you guys" for me; everyone over twelve is "sir" or "ma'am." I ply them with iced tea and

coffee refills; I return, mid-meal, to inquire how everything is; I doll up their salads with chopped raw mushrooms, summer squash slices, or whatever bits of produce I can find that have survived their sojourn in the cold-storage room mold-free.

There is Benny, for example, a short, tight, muscled sewer repairman, who cannot even think of eating until he has absorbed a half-hour of air-conditioning and ice water. We chat about hypothermia and electrolytes until he is ready to order some finicky combination like soup of the day, garden salad, and a side of grits. There are the German tourists who are so touched by my pidgin "Willkommen" and "Ist alles gut?" that they actually tip. (Europeans, spoiled by their trade-union ridden, high-wage welfare states, generally do not know that they are supposed to tip. Some restaurants, the Hearthside included, allow servers to "grat" their foreign customers, or add a tip to the bill. Since this amount is added before the customers have a chance to tip or not tip, the practice amounts to an automatic penalty for imperfect English.) There are the two dirt smudged lesbians, just off their construction shift, who are impressed enough by my suave handling of the fly in the pina colada that they take the time to praise me to Stu, the assistant manager. There's Sam, the kindly retired cop, who has to plug up his tracheotomy hole with one finger in order to force the cigarette smoke into his lungs.

Sometimes I play with the fantasy that I am a princess who, in penance for some tiny transgression, has undertaken to feed each of her subjects by hand. But the non-princesses working with me are just as indulgent, even when this means flouting management rules--concerning, for example, the number of croutons that can go on a salad (six) - "Put on all you want," Gail whispers, "as long as Stu isn't looking." She dips into her own tip money to buy biscuits and gravy for an out-of-work mechanic who's used up all his money on dental surgery, inspiring me to pick up the tab for his milk and pie. Maybe the same high levels of agape can be found throughout the "hospitality industry." I remember the poster decorating one of the apartments I looked at, which said "If you seek happiness for yourself you will never find it. Only when you seek happiness for others will it come to you," or 'words to that effect-an odd sentiment, it seemed to me at the time, to find in the dank one-room basement apartment of a bellhop at the Best Western. At the Hearthside, we utilize whatever bits of autonomy we have to ply our customers with the illicit calories

THE WAY WE NEVER WERE

American Families and the Nostalgia Trap

--Stephanie Coontz (Basic Books-\$16)-1992

Coontz is up north teaching at a college. She is still writing, and contributing to magazines.

I avoided this book so long because of the cover. That was its 'Leave it to Beaver' point. It worked too well with me. When I finally read it 8 years after publication, I found that I had missed so many insights and angles....Coontz may not have meant the book as an indictment against the atomized suburbia of modern america, but it came across to me as such. Her research on black american families has been noted in other books. She and Barbara E, and Katha P. are feminists to me. Not the Gloria Steinems, or the president of NOW. You can't discuss family responsibility and female rights without considering economics. Coontz would agree.

that signal our love. It is our job as servers to assemble the salads and desserts, pouring the dressings and squirting the whipped cream.. We also control the number of butter patties our customers get and the amount of sour cream on their baked potatoes. So if you wonder why Americans are so obese, consider the fact that waitresses both express their humanity and earn their tips through the covert distribution of fats.

Ten days into it, this is beginning to look like a livable lifestyle. I like Gail, who is "looking at fifty" but moves so fast she can alight in one place and then another without apparently being anywhere between them. I clown around with Lionel, the teenage Haitian busboy, and catch a few fragments of conversation with Joan, the svelte fortyish hostess and militant feminist who is the only one of us who dares to tell Jack to shut the fuck up. I even warm up to Jack when, on a slow night and to make-up for a particularly unwarranted attack on my abilities, or so I imagine, he tells me about his glory days as a young man at "coronary school"---or do you say "culinary"?-in Brooklyn, where he dated a knock-out Puerto Rican chick and learned everything there is to know about food. I finish up at 10:00 or 10:30, depending on how much side work I've been able to get done during the shift, and cruise home to the tapes I snatched up at random when I left my real home-Marianne Faithfull, Tracy Chapman, Enigma, King Sunny Ade, the Violent Femmes-just drained enough for the music to set my cranium resonating but hardly dead. Midnight snack is Wheat Thins and Monterey Jack, accompanied by cheap white wine on ice and whatever AMC has to offer. To bed by 1:30 or 2:00, up at 9:00 or 10:00, read for an hour while my uniform whirls around in the landlord's washing machine, and then it's another eight hours spent following Mao's central instruction, as laid out in the Little Red Book, which was: Serve the people.

I could drift along like this, in some dreamy proletarian idyll, except for two things. One is management. If I have kept this subject on the margins thus far it is because I still flinch to think that I spent all those weeks under the surveillance of men (and later women) whose job it was to monitor my behavior for signs of sloth, theft, drug abuse, or worse. Not that managers and especially "assistant managers" in low-wage settings like this are exactly the class enemy. In the restaurant business, they are mostly former cooks or servers, still capable of pinch-hitting in the kitchen or on the floor, just as in hotels they are likely to be former clerks, and paid a salary of only about \$400 a week. But everyone knows they have crossed over to the other side, which is, crudely put, corporate as opposed to human. Cooks want to prepare tasty meals; servers want to serve them graciously; but managers are there for only one reason-to make sure that money is made for some theoretical entity that exists far away in Chicago or New York, if a corporation can be said to have a physical existence at all. Reflecting on her career, Gail tells me ruefully that she had sworn, years ago, never to work for a corporation again'. "They don't cut you no stack. You give and you give, and they take."

Managers can sit-for hours at a time if they want-but it's their job to see that no one else ever does, even when there's nothing to do, and this is why, for servers, slow times can be as exhausting as rushes..You start dragging out each little chore, because if the manager on duty catches you in an idle moment, he will give you something far nastier to do. So I wipe, I clean, I consolidate ketchup bottles and recheck the cheesecake supply, even tour the tables to make sure the customer evaluation forms are all standing perkily in their places'-wondering all the time how many calories I burn in these strictly theatrical exercises. When, on a particularly

dead afternoon, Stu finds me glancing at a USA Today a customer has left behind, he assigns me to vacuum the entire floor with the broken vacuum cleaner that has a handle only two feet long, and the only way to do that without incurring orthopedic damage is to proceed from spot to spot on your knees.

On my first Friday at the Hearthside there is a "mandatory meeting for all restaurant employees," which I attend, eager for insight into our overall marketing strategy and the niche (your basic Ohio cuisine with a tropical twist?) we aim to inhabit. But there is no "we" at this meeting. Phillip, our top manager except for an occasional "consultant" sent out by corporate headquarters, opens it with a sneer: "The break room-it's disgusting. Butts in the ashtrays, newspapers lying around, crumbs." This windowless little room, which also houses the time clock for the entire hotel, is where we stash our bags and civilian clothes and take our half-hour meat breaks. But a break room is not a right, he tells us. It can be taken away. We should also know that the lockers in the break room and whatever is in them can be searched at any time. Then comes gossip; there has been gossip; gossip (which seems to mean employees talking among themselves) must stop. Off-duty employees are henceforth barred from, eating at the restaurant, because "other servers gather around them and gossip." When Phillip has exhausted his agenda of rebukes, Joan complains about the condition of the ladies' room and I throw in my two bits about the vacuum cleaner. But I don't see any backup coming from my fellow servers, each of whom has subsided into her own personal funk; Gail, my role model, stares sorrowfully at a point six inches from her nose. The meeting ends when Andy, one of the cooks, gets up, muttering about breaking up his day off for this almighty bullshit.

Just four days later we are suddenly summoned into the kitchen at 3:30 P.M., even though there are live tables on the floor. We all-about ten of us-stand around Phillip, who announces grimly that there has been a report of some "drug activity" on the night shift and that, as a result, we are now to be a "drugfree" workplace, meaning that all new hires will be tested, as will possibly current employees on a random basis. I am glad that this part of the kitchen is so dark, because I find myself blushing as hard as if I had been caught toking UP in the ladies' room myself- I haven't been treated this way-lined up in the corridor, threatened with locker searches, peppered with carelessly aimed accusations-since junior high school. Back on the floor, Joan cracks, "Next they'll be telling us we can't have sex on the job." When I ask Stu what happened to inspire the crackdown, he just mutters about "management decisions" and takes the opportunity to upbraid Gail and me for being too generous with the rolls. From now on there's to be only one per customer, and it goes out with the dinner, not with the salad. He's also been riding the cooks, prompting Andy to come out of the kitchen and observe-with the serenity of a man whose customary implement is a butcher knife-that "Stu has a death wish today."

Later in the evening, the gossip crystallizes around the theory that Stu is himself the drug culprit, that he uses the restaurant phone to order up marijuana and sends one of the late servers out to fetch it for him. The server was caught, and she may have ratted Stu out or at least said enough to cast some suspicion on him, thus accounting for his pissy behavior. Who knows?, Lionel, the busboy, entertains us for the rest of the shift by standing just behind Stu's back and sucking deliriously on an imaginary

joint.

The other problem, in addition to the less than-nurturing management style, is that this job shows no sign of being financially viable. You might imagine, from a comfortable distance, that people who live, year in and year out, on \$6 to \$10 an hour have discovered some survival stratagems unknown to the middle class. But no. It's not hard to get my co-workers to talk about their living situations, because housing, in, almost every case, is the principal source of disruption in their lives, the first thing they fill you in on when they arrive for their shifts. After a week, I have compiled the following survey:

-Gail is sharing a room in a well-known downtown flop-house for which she and a roommate pay about \$250 a week. Her roommate, a male friend, has begun hitting on her, driving her nuts, but the rent would be impossible alone.

- Claude, the Haitian cook, is desperate to get out of the two-room apartment he shares with his girlfriend and two other, unrelated, people. As far as I can determine, the other Haitian men (most of whom only speak Creole) live in similarly crowded situations.

- Annette, a twenty-year-old server who is six months pregnant and has been abandoned by her boyfriend, lives with her mother, a postal clerk.

- Marianne and her boyfriend are paying \$170 a week for a one-person trailer.

-Jack, who is, at \$10 an hour, the wealthiest of us, lives in the trailer he owns, paying only the \$400-a-month lot fee.

- The other white cook, Andy, lives on his dry-docked boat, which, as far as I can tell from his loving descriptions, can't be more than twenty feet long. He offers to take me out on it, once it's repaired, but the offer comes with inquiries as to my marital status, so I do not follow up on it.

-Tina and her husband are paying \$60 a night for a double room in a Days Inn. This is because they have no car and the Days Inn is within walking distance of the Hearthside. When Marianne, one of the breakfast servers, is tossed out of her trailer for subletting (which is against the trailer-park rules), she leaves her boyfriend and moves in with Tina and her husband.

-Joan, who had footed me with her numerous and tasteful outfits (hostesses wear their own clothes), lives in a van she parks behind a shop, ping center at night and showers in Tina's motel room. The clothes are from thrift shops.

It strikes me, in my middle-class solipsism, that there is gross improvidence in some of these arrangements. When Gail and I are wrapping silverware in napkins-the only task for which we are permitted to sit--she tells me she is thinking of escaping from her roommate by moving into the Days Inn herself I am astounded: How can she even think of paying between \$40 and \$60 a day? But if I was afraid of sounding like a social worker, I come out just sounding like a fool. She squints at me in disbelief, "And where am I supposed to get a month's rent and a month's deposit for an apartment?" I'd been feeling pretty smug about my \$500 efficiency, but of course it was made possible only by the \$1,300 I had allotted myself for start-up costs when I began my low-wage life: \$1,000 for the first month's rent and deposit, \$100 for initial groceries and cash in my pocket, \$200 stuffed away for emergencies. In poverty, as in certain propositions in physics, starting conditions are everything.

There are no secret economies that nourish the poor; on

the contrary, there are a host of special costs. If you can't put up the two months' rent you need to secure an apartment, you end up paying through the nose for a room by the week. If you have only a room, with a hot plate at best, you can't save by cooking up huge lentil stews that can be frozen for the week ahead. You eat fastfood of the hot dogs and styrofoam cups of soup that can be microwaved in a convenience store. If you have no money for health insurance-and the Hearthside's niggardly plan kicks in only after three months-you go without routine care or prescription drugs and end up paying the price. Gail, for example, was fine until she ran out of money for estrogen pills. She is supposed to be on the company plan by now, but they claim to have lost her application - form and need to begin the paperwork all over again. So she spends \$9 per migraine pill to control the headaches she wouldn't have, she insists, if her estrogen supplements were covered. Similarly, Marianne's boyfriend lost his job as a roofer because he missed so much time after getting a cut on his foot for which he couldn't afford the prescribed antibiotic.

My own situation, when I sit down to assess it after two weeks of work, would not be much better if this were my actual life. The seductive thing about waitressing is that you don't have to wait for payday to feel a few bills in your pocket, and my tips usually cover meals and gas, plus something left over to stuff into the kitchen drawer I use as a bank. But as the tourist business slows in the summer heat, I sometimes leave work with only \$20 in tips (the gross is higher, but servers share about 15 percent of their tips with the bus, boys and bartenders). With wages included, this amounts to about the minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour. Although the sum in the drawer is piling up, at the present rate of accumulation it will be more than a hundred dollars short of my rent when the end of the month comes around. Nor can I see any expenses to cut. True, I haven't gone the lentil-stew route yet, but that's because I don't have a large cooking-pot, pot holders, or a ladle to stir with (which cost about \$30 at Kmart, less at thrift stores), not to mention onions, carrots, and the indispensable bay leaf I do make my lunch almost every day-usually some slow-burning, high-protein combo like frozen chicken patties with melted cheese on top and canned pinto beans on the side. Dinner is at the Hearthside, which offers its employees a choice of BIT, fish sandwich, or hamburger for only \$2. The burger lasts longest, especially if it's heaped with gut-puckering jalaperios, but by midnight my stomach is growling again.

So unless I want to start using my car as a residence, I have to find, a second, or alternative, job. I call all the hotels where I filled out housekeeping applications weeks ago-the Hyatt, Holiday Inn, Econo Lodge, HoJo's, Best Western, plus a half dozen or so locally run guesthouses. Nothing. Then I start making the rounds again, wasting whole mornings waiting for some assistant manager to show up, even dipping into places so creepy that the front desk clerk greets you from behind bullet proof glass and sells pints of liquor over the counter. But either someone has ex, posed my real life housekeeping habits-which are, shall we say, mellow-or I am at the wrong end of some infallible ethnic equation: most, but, by no means all, of the working housekeepers I on my job searches are African Americans, Spanish-speaking, or immigrants from the Central European post-Communist world, whereas servers are almost invariably white and monolingually English-speaking. When I finally get a positive response, I have been identified once again as server material. Jerry's, which is part of a well-known national family restaurant chain and physically attached here to another budget hotel chain, is ready to use me at once. The prospect is both exciting and terrifying, because,

with about the same number of tables and counter seats, Jerry's attracts three or four times the volume of customers as the gloomy old Hearthside.

Picture a fat person's hell, and I don't mean a place with no food. Instead there is everything you might eat if eating had no bodily consequences---cheese fries, chickenfried steaks, fudge-laden desserts---only here every bite must be paid for, one way or another, in human discomfort. The kitchen is a cavern, a stomach leading to the lower intestine that is the garbage and dishwashing area, from which issue bizarre smells combining the edible and the offal: creamy carrion, pizza barf, and that unique and enigmatic Jerry's scent---citrus fart. The floor is slick with spills, forcing us to walk through the kitchen with tiny steps, 'like Susan McDougal in leg irons. Sinks everywhere are clogged with scraps of lettuce, decomposing lemon wedges, waterlogged toast crusts. Put your hand down on any counter and you risk being stuck to it by the film of ancient syrup spills, and this is unfortunate, because hands are utensils here, used for scooping up lettuce onto salad plates, lifting out pie slices, and even moving hash browns. from one plate to another. The regulation poster in the single unisex restroom admonishes us to wash our hands thoroughly and even offers instructions for doing so, but there is always some vital substance missing---soap, paper towels, toilet paper---and I never find all three at once. You learn to stuff your pockets with napkins before going in there, and too bad about the customers, who must eat, though they don't realize this, almost literally out of our hands.

The break room typifies the whole situation: there is none, because there are no breaks at Jerry's. For six to eight hours in a row, you never sit except to pee. Actually, there are three folding chairs at a table immediately adjacent to the bathroom, but hardly anyone ever sits here, in the very rectum of the gastro-architectural system. Rather, the function of the peritoilet area is to house the ashtrays in which servers and dish, washers leave their cigarettes burning at all times, like votive candles, so that they don't have to waste time lighting up again when they dash back for a puff. Almost everyone smokes as if his or her pulmonary well-being depended on it---the multinational melange of cooks, the Czech dishwashers, the servers, who are all American natives---creating an atmosphere in which oxygen is only an occasional pollutant. My first morning at Jerry's, when the hypoglycemic shakes set in, I complain to one of my fellow servers that I don't understand how she ' can go so long without food. "Well, I don't understand how you can go so long without a cigarette," she responds in a tone of reproach---because work is what you do for others; smoking is what you do for yourself. I don't know why the antismoking crusaders have never grasped the element of defiant selfnurturance that makes the habit so endearing to its victims---as if, in the American workplace, the only thing people have to call their own is the tumors they are nourishing and the spare moments they devote to feeding them.

Now, the Industrial Revolution is not an easy transition, especially when you have to zip through it in just a couple of days. I have gone from craft work straight into the factory, from the air-conditioned morgue of the Hearthside directly into the flames. Customers arrive in human waves, sometimes disgorged fifty at a time from their tour buses, peckish and whiny. Instead of two "girls" on the floor at once, there can be as many as six of us running around in our brilliant pink-and-orange Hawaiian shirts. Conversations, either with customers or fellow employees, seldom last

more than twenty seconds at a time. On my first day, in fact, I am hurt by my sister servers' coldness. My mentor for the day is an emotionally uninflected twenty-three-year-old, and the others, who gossip a little among themselves about the real reason someone is out sick today and the size of the bail bond someone else has had to pay, ignore me completely. On my second day, I find out why. "Well, it's good to see you again," one of them says in greeting. "Hardly anyone comes back after the first day." I feel powerfully vindicated---a survivor---but it would take a long time, probably months, before I could hope to be accepted into this sorority.

I start out with the beautiful, heroic idea handling the two jobs at once, and for two days almost do it: the breakfast/lunch shift at Jerry's, which goes till 2:00, arriving at the Hearthside at 2:10, and attempting to hold out until 10:00. In the ten minutes between jobs, I pick up a spicy chicken sandwich at the Wendy's drive-through window, gobble it down in the car, and change from khaki slacks to black, from Hawaiian to rust polo. There is a problem, though. When during the 3:00 to 4:00 Pm. dead time I finally sit down to wrap silver, my flesh seems to bond to the seat. I try to refuel with a purloined cup of soup, as I've seen Gail and Joan do dozens of times, but a manager catches me and hisses "No eating!" though there's not a customer around to be offended by the sight of food making contact with a server's lips. So I tell Gail I'm going to quit, and she hugs me and says she might just follow me to Jerry's herself.

But the chances of this, are minuscule. She has left the flop-house and her annoying roommate and is back to living in her beat-up old truck.. But guess what? she reports to me excitedly later that evening: Phillip has given her permission to park overnight in the hotel parking lot, as long as she keeps out of sight, and the parking lot should be totally safe, since it's patrolled by a hotel security guard! With the Hearthside offering benefits like that, how could anyone think of leaving?

Gail would have triumphed at Jerry's, I'm sure, but for me it's a crash course in exhaustion management. Years ago, the kindly fry cook who trained me to waitress at a Los Angeles truck stop used to say: Never make an unnecessary trip; if you don't have to walk fast, walk slow; if you don't have to walk, stand. But at Jerry's the effort of distinguishing necessary from unnecessary and urgent from whenever would itself be too much of an energy drain. The only thing to do is to treat each shift one-time-only emergency: you've got fifty starving people out there, lying scattered on the battlefield, so get out there and feed them! Forget that you will have to do this again tomorrow, forget that you will have to be alert enough to dodge the drunks on the drive home tonight---just bum, bum, burn! Ideally, at some point you enter what servers call "a rhythm" and psychologists term a "flow state," in which signals pass from the sense organs directly to the muscles, bypassing the cerebral cortex, and a Zen-like emptiness sets in. A male server from the Hearthside's morning shift tells me about the time he "pulled a triple"---three shifts in a row, all the way around the clock---and then got off and had a drink and met this girl, and maybe he shouldn't tell me this, but they had sex right then and there, and it was like, beautiful.

But there's another capacity of the neuromuscular system, which is pain. I start tossing back drugstore-brand ibuprofen pills as if they were vitamin C, four before each shift, because an old mouse-related repetitive-stress injury in my upper back has come back to full-spasm strength, thanks 'to the tray carrying. In my ordinary life, this level of disability might justify a day of ice packs and stretching. Here I comfort myself with the Aleve commercial in which the cute blue-collar guy asks. If you quit after working four hours, what would your boss say? And the not-so-cute blue-collar guy, who's lugging a metal beam on

his back, answers: He'd fire me, that's what. But fortunately, the commercial tells us, we workers can exert the same kind of authority over our painkillers that our bosses exert over us. If Tylenol doesn't want to work for more than four hours, you just fire its ass and switch to Aleve.

True, I take occasional breaks from this life, going home now and then to catch up on e-mail and for conjugal visits (though I am careful to "pay" for anything I eat there), seeing The Truman Show with friends and letting them buy my ticket. And I still have those what-am-I-doing-here moments at work, when I get so homesick for the printed word that I obsessively reread the six-page menu. But as the days go by, my old life is beginning to look exceedingly strange. The e-mails and phone messages addressed to my former self come from a distant race of people with exotic concerns and far too much time on their hands. The neighborly -market I used to cruise for produce now looks, forbiddingly like a Manhattan yuppie emporium,. And when I sit down -one morning in my real home to pay bills from my past life, I am dazzled at the two- and three-figure sums owed to outfits like Club BodyTech and Amazon.com.

Management at Jerry's is generally calmer and more "professional" than at the Hearthside, with two exceptions. One is joy, a plump, blowsy woman in her early thirties, who once kindly devoted several minutes to instructing me in the correct one-handed method of carrying trays but whose moods change disconcertingly from shift to shift and even within one. Then there's B.J., a.k.a. B.J.-the-bitch, whose contribution is to stand by the kitchen counter and yell, "Nita, your order's up, move it!" or, "Barbara, didn't you see you've got another table out there? Come on, girl!" Among other things, she is hated for having replaced the whipped-cream. squirt cans with big plastic whipped-cream-filled baggies that have to be squeezed with both hands-because, reportedly, she saw or thought she saw employees trying to inhale the propellant gas from the squirt cans, in the hope that it might be nitrous oxide. On my third night, she pulls me aside abruptly and brings her face so close that it looks as if she's planning to butt me with her forehead. But instead of saying, "You're fired," she says, "You're doing fine." The only trouble is I'm spending time chatting with customers: "That's how they're getting you." Furthermore I am letting them "run me," which means harassment by sequential. demands: you bring the ketchup and they decide they want extra Thousand Island; you bring that and they announce they now need a side of fries; and so on into distraction. Finally she tells me not to take her wrong. She tries to say things in a nice way, but you get into a mode, you know, because everything has to move so fast.

I mumble thanks for the advice, feeling like I've just been stripped naked by the crazed enforcer of some ancient sumptuary law: No chatting for you, girl. No fancy service ethic allowed for the serfs. Chatting with customers is for the beautiful young college-educated servers in the downtown carpaccio joints, the kids who can make \$70 to \$100 a night. What had I been thinking? My job is to move orders from tables to kitchen and then trays from kitchen to tables. Customers are, in fact, the major obstacles to the smooth transfor. mation of information into food and food into money-they are, in short, the enemy. And the painful thing is that I'm beginning to see it this way myself. There are the traditional asshole types-frat boys who down multiple Buds and then make a fuss because the steaks are so emaciated and the fries so sparse-as well as the variously impaired-due to age, diabetes, or literacy issues-who require patient nutritional counseling. The worst, for some reason, are the Visible Christians-like the ten-person table, all jolly and sanctified after Sunday-night service, who

run me mercilessly and then leave me \$1 on a \$92 bill. Or the guy with the crucifixion T-shirt (SOMEONE TO LOOK UP TO) who complains that his baked potato is too hard and his iced tea too. icy (I cheerfully fix both) and leaves no tip. As a general rule, people wearing crosses or WMD? (What Would Jesus Do?) buttons took at us disapprovingly no matter what we do, as if they were confusing waitressing with Mary Magdalene's original profession.

I make friends, over time, with the other "girls" who work my shift: Nita, the tattooed twentysomething who taunts us by going around saying brightly, "Have we started making money yet?" Ellen, whose teenage son cooks on the graveyard shift and who once managed a restaurant in Massachusetts but won't try out for management here because she prefers being a "common worker" and not "ordering people around." Easy-going fiftyish Lucy, with the raucous laugh, who limps toward the end of the shift, because of something that has gone wrong with her leg, the exact nature of which cannot be determined without health insurance. We. talk about the usual girl thingsmen, children, and the sinister allure of Jerry's chocolate peanut-butter cream pie-though no one, I notice, ever brings up anything potentially expensive, like shopping or movies. As at the Hearthside, the only recreation ever referred to is partying, which requires little more than some beer, a joint, and a few close friends. Still, no one here is homeless, or cops to it anyway, thanks usually to a working husband or boyfriend. All in all, we form a reliable mutual-support group: If one of us is feeling sick or overwhelmed, another one will "bev" a table or even carry trays for her. If one of us is off sneaking a cigarette or a pee, the others will do their best to conceal her absence from the enforcers of corporate rationality.

But my saving human connection-my oxytocin receptor, as it were-is George, the nineteenyear-old, fresh-off-the-boat Czech dishwasher. We get to talking when he asks me, tortuously, how much cigarettes cost at Jerry's. I do my best to explain that they cost over a dollar more here than at a regular store and suggest that he just take one from the half-filled packs that are always laying around on the break table. But that would be unthinkable. Except for the one tiny ear-ring signaling his allegiance to some vaguely alternative point of view, George is a perfect straight arrow crew-cut, hardworking, and hungry for eye contact. "Czech Republic," I ask, "or "Slovakia"and he seems delighted that I know the difference. "Vaclav Havel," I try. "Velvet Revolution, Frank Zappa?" "Yes, yes, 1989," he says, and I realize we are talking about history.

My project is to teach George English. "How are you today, George?" I say at the start of each shift. "I am good, and how are you today, Barbara?" I learn that he is not paid by Jerry's but by the "agent" who shipped him over-\$5 an hour, with the agent getting the dollar or so difference between that and what Jerry's pays dish, washers. I learn also that he shares an apartment with a crowd of other Czech "dishers," as he calls them, and that he cannot sleep until one of them goes off for his shift, leaving a vacant bed. We are having one of our ESL sessions late one afternoon when B.J. catches us at it and orders "Joseph" to take up the rubber mats on the floor near the dishwashing sinks and mop underneath. "I thought your name was George," I say loud enough for B.J. to hear as she strides off back to the counter. Is she embarrassed? Maybe a little, because she greets me back at the counter with "George, Joseph-there are so many of them!" I say nothing, neither nodding nor smiling, and for this I am punished later when I think I am ready to go and she announces that I need to roll fifty more sets of silverware and

isn't it time I mixed up a fresh fourgallon batch of blue-cheese dressing? May you grow old in this place, B.J., is the curse I beam out at her when I am finally permitted to leave. May the syrup spills glue your feet to the floor.

I make the decision to move closer to Key West. First, because of the drive. Second and third, also because of the drive: gas is eating-up \$4 to \$5 a day, and although Jerry's is as high-volume as you can get, the tips average only 10 percent, and not just for a newbie like me. Between the base pay of \$2.15 an hour and the obligation to share tips with the busboys and dishwashers, we're averaging only about \$7.50 an hour. Then there is the \$30 I had to spend on the regulation tan slacks worn by Jerry's servers-a setback it could take weeks to absorb. (I had combed the town's two downscale department stores hoping for something cheaper but decided in the end that these marked-down Dockers, originally \$49, were more likely to survive a daily washing.) Of my fellow servers, everyone who lacks a working husband or boyfriend seems to have a second job: Nita does something at a computer eight hours a day; another welds. Without the forty-five-minute commute, I can picture myself working two jobs and having the time to shower between them.

So I take the \$500 deposit I have coming from my landlord, the \$400 I have earned toward the next month's rent, plus the \$200 reserved for emergencies, and use the \$1,100 to pay the rent and deposit on trailer number 46 in the Overseas Trailer Park, a mile from the cluster of budget hotels that constitute Key West's version of an industrial park. Number 46 is about eight feet in' width and shaped like a barbell inside, with a narrow region-because of the sink and the stove-separating the bedroom from what might optimistically be called the "living" area, with its two-person table and half-sized couch. The bathroom is so small my knees rub against the shower stall when I sit on the toilet, and you can't just leap out of the bed, you have to climb down to the foot of it in order to find a patch of floor space to stand on. Outside, I am within a few yards of a liquor store, a bar that advertises "free beer tomorrow," a convenience store, and a Burger King-but no supermarket or, alas, laundromat. By deputation, the Overseas park is a nest of crime and crack, and I am hoping at least for some vibrant, multicultural street life. But desolation rules night and day, except for a thin stream of pedestrian traffic heading for their jobs at the Sheraton or 7-Eleven. There are not exactly people here but what amounts to canned labor, being preserved from the heat between shifts.

In line with my reduced living conditions, a new form of ugliness arises at Jerry's. First we are confronted-via an announcement on the computers through which we input orders-with the new rule that the hotel bar is henceforth off limits to restaurant employees. The culprit, I learn through the grapevine, is the ultra-efficient gal who trained me--another trailerhome dweller and a mother of three. Something had set her off one morning, so she slipped out for a nip and returned to the floor impaired. This mostly hurts Ellen, whose habit it is to free her hair from its rubber band and drop by the bar for a couple of Zins before heading home at the end of the shift, but all -of us feel the chill. Then the next day, when I go for straws, for the first time I find the dry-storage room locked. Ted, the portly assistant manager who opens it for me, explains that he caught one of the dishwashers attempting to steal something, and, unfortunately, the miscreant will be with us until a replacement can be found-hence the locked door. I neglect to ask what he had been trying to steal, but Ted tells me who he is

the kid with the buzz cut and the earring. You know, he's back there right now.

I wish I could say I rushed back and confronted George to get his side of the story. I wish I could say I stood up to Ted and insisted that George be given a translator and allowed to defend himself, or announced that I'd find a lawyer who'd handle the case pro bono. The mystery to me is that there's not much worth stealing in the dry-storage room, at least not in any fenceable quantity: "Is George here, and am having 200-maybe 250-ketchup packets. What do you say?" My guess is that he had taken-if he had taken anything at all-some Saltines or a can of cherry-pie mix, and that the motive for taking it was hunger.

So why didn't I intervene? Certainly not because I was held back by the kind of moral paralysis that can pass as journalistic objectivity. On the contrary, something new-something loathsome, and servile-had infected me, along with the kitchen odors that I could still sniff on my bra when I finally undressed at night. In real life I am moderately brave, but plenty of brave people shed their courage in concentration camps, and maybe something similar goes on in the infinitely more congenial milieu of the low-wage American workplace. Maybe, in a month or two more at Jerry's, I might have regained my crusading spirit. Then again, in a month or two I might have turned into a different person altogether say, the kind of person who would have turned George in.

But this is not something I am slated to find out. When my month-long plunge into poverty is almost over, I finally land my dream job housekeeping. I do this by walking into the personnel office of the only place I figure I might have some credibility, the hotel attached to -jerry's, and confiding urgently that I have to have a second job if I am to pay my rent and, no, it couldn't be front-desk clerk. "All right," the personnel lady fairly spits, "So it's housekeeping," and she marches me back to meet Maria, the housekeeping manager, a tiny, frenetic Hispanic woman who greets me as "babe" and hands me a pamphlet emphasizing the need for a positive attitude. The hours are nine in the morning till whenever, the pay is \$6.10 an hour, and there's one week of vacation a year. I don't have to ask about health insurance once I meet Carlotta, the middle-aged African-American woman who will be training me. Carla, as she tells me to call her, is missing all of her top front teeth.

On that first day of housekeeping and last day of my entire project-although I don't yet know it's the last--Carla is in a foul mood. We have been given nineteen rooms to clean, most of them "checkouts," as opposed to "stayovers," that require the whole enchilada of bed, stripping, vacuuming, and bathroom-scrubbing. When one of the rooms that had been listed -as a stay-over turns out to be a checkout, Carla calls Maria to complain, but of course to no avail. "So make up the motherfucker," Carla orders me, and I do the beds while she sloshes around the bathroom. For four hours without a break I strip and remake beds, taking about four and a half minutes per queen-sized bed, which I could get down to three if there were any reason to. We try to avoid vacuuming by picking up the larger specks by often there is nothing to do but drag the monstrous vacuum cleaner-it weighs about thirty pounds--off our cart and try to wrestle it around the floor. Sometimes Carla hands me the squirt bottle of "BAM" an acronym for something that begins, ominously, with "butyric"; the rest has been worn off the label) and lets me do the bathrooms. No service ethic challenges me here to new heights of performance. I just concentrate on removing the pubic hairs from the bathtubs, or at least the dark ones that, I can see.

I had looked forward to the breaking-and-entering aspect of cleaning the stay-overs, the chance to examine the secret, physical existence of strangers. But the contents of the rooms are

always banal and surprisingly neat--zipped up shaving kits, shoes lined up against the wall (there are no closets), flyers for snorkeling trips, maybe an empty wine bottle or two. It is the TV that keeps us going, from Jerry to Sally to Hawaii Five-O and then on to the soaps' If there's something especially arresting, like "Won't Take No for an Answer" on Jerry, we sit down on the edge of a bed and giggle for a moment as if this were a pajama party instead of a terminally dead-end job. The soaps are the best, and Carla turns the volume up full blot so that she won't miss anything from the bathroom or while the vacuum is on. In room 503, Marcia confronts Jeff about Lauren. In 505, Lauren taunts poor cuckolded Marcia. In 511, Helen offers Amanda \$10,000 to stop seeing Eric, prompting Carla to emerge from the bathroom to study Amanda's troubled face. "You take it, girl," she advises. "I would for sure."

The tourists' rooms that we clean and, beyond' them, the far more expensively appointed interiors in the soaps, begin after a while to merge. We have entered a better world--a world of comfort where every day is a day off, waiting to be filled up with sexual intrigue. We, however, are only gatecrashers in this fantasy, forced to pay for our presence with backaches and perpetual thirst. The mirrors, and there are far too many of them in hotel rooms, contain the kind of person you would normally find pushing a shopping cart down a city street--bedraggled, dressed in a damp hotel polo shirt two sizes too large, and with sweat dribbling down her chin like drool. I am enormously relieved when Carla announces a half-hour meal break, but my appetite fades when I see that the bag of hot-dog rolls she has been carrying around on our cart is not trash salvaged from a checkout but what she has brought for her lunch.

When I request permission to leave at about 3:30, another housekeeper warns me that no one has so far succeeded in combining housekeeping at the hotel with serving at Jerry's: "Some kid did it once for five days, and you're no kid." With that helpful information in mind, I rush back to number 46, down four Advils (the name brand this time), shower, stooping to fit into the stall, and at. tempt to compose myself for the oncoming shift. So much for what Marx termed the "reproduction of labor power," meaning the things a worker has to do just so she'll be ready to work again. The only unforeseen obstacle to the smooth transition from job to job is that my tan Jerry's slacks, which had looked reasonably clean by 40 watt bulb last night --when I handwashed my Hawaiian shirt, prove by daylight to be mottled with ketchup and ranch-dressing stains. I spend most of my hour long break between jobs attempting to remove the edible portions with a sponge and then drying the slacks over the hood of my car in the sun. I can do this two job thing, is my theory, if I can drink enough caffeine and avoid getting distracted by George's ever more obvious suffering. The first few days after being caught he seemed not to understand the trouble he was in and our chirpy little conversations had continued. But the last couple of shifts he's been listless and unshaven, and tonight he looks like the ghost we all know him to be, with dark half-moons hanging from his eyes. At one point, when I am briefly immobilized by the task of filling little paper cups with sour cream for baked potatoes, he comes over and looks as if he'd like to explore the limits of our shared vocabulary, but I am called to the floor for a table. I resolve to give him all my tips that night and to hell with the experiment in low-wage money management. At eight, Ellen and I grab a snack together standing at the mephitic end of the kitchen counter, but I can only manage two or three mozzarella stick and lunch had been a mere handful of McNuggets. I am not tired at all, I as, sure myself, though it may be that there is simply no more "I" left to do the tiredness monitoring. What I would see, if I were more alert to the situation, is that the forces of destruc-

tion are already massing against me. There is only one cook on duty, a young man named Jesus ("Hay-Sue," that is) and he is new to the job. And there is joy, who shows up to take over in the middle of the shift, wearing high heels and a long, clingy white dress and fuming as if she'd just been stood up in some cocktail bar.

Then it comes, the perfect storm. Four of my tables fill up at once. Four tables is nothing for me now, but only so long as they are obligingly staggered. As I bev table 27, tables 25, 28, and 24 are watching enviously. As I bev 25, 24 glowers because their bevs haven't even been ordered. Twenty-eight is four yuppyish types, meaning everything on the side and agonizing instructions as to the chicken Caesars. Twenty-five is a middle-aged black couple, who complain, with some justice, that the iced tea isn't fresh and the tabletop is sticky. But table 24 is the meteorological event of the century: ten British tourists who seem to have made the decision to absorb the American experience entirely by mouth. Here everyone has at least two drinks--iced tea and milk shake, Michelob and water (with lemon slice, please) and a huge promiscuous orgy of breakfast specials, mozz sticks, chicken strips, quesadillas, burgers with cheese and without, sides of hash browns with cheddar, with onions, with gravy, seasoned fries, plain fries, banana splits. Poor Jesus! Poor me! Because when I arrive with their first tray of food--after three prior trips just to refill bevs--Princess Di refuses to eat her chicken strips with her pancake-and-sausage special, since, as she now reveals, the strips were meant to be an appetizer. Maybe the others would have accepted their meals, but Di, who is deep into her third Michelob, insists that everything else go back while they work on their "starters." Meanwhile, the yuppies are waving me down for more decaf and the black couple looks ready to summon the NAACP.

Much of what happened next is lost in the fog of war. Jesus starts going under. The little printer on the counter in front of him is spewing out orders faster than he can rip them off, much less produce the meals. Even the invincible Ellen is ashen from stress. I bring table 24 their reheated main courses, which they immediately reject as either too cold or fossilized by the, microwave. When I return to the kitchen with their trays (three trays in three trips), joy confronts me with arms akimbo-- "What is this?" She means the food--the plates of rejected pancakes, hash browns in assorted flavors, toasts, burgers, sausages, eggs. "Uh, scrambled with cheddar," I try, "and that's. . ." "NO," she screams in my face. "Is it a traditional, a super-scramble, an eye-opener?" I pretend to study my check for a clue, but entropy has been up to its tricks, not only on the plates but in my head, and I have to admit that the original order is beyond reconstruction. "You don't know an eye-opener from a traditional?" she demands in outrage. All I know, in fact, is that my legs have lost interest in the current venture and have announced their intention to fold. I am saved by a yuppie (mercifully not one of mine) who chooses this moment to charge into the kitchen to bellow that his food is twenty-five minutes late. joy screams at him to get the hell out of her kitchen, please, and then turns on Jesus in a fury, hurting an empty tray across the room for emphasis.

I leave. I don't walk out, I just leave. I don't finish my side work or pick up my credit-card tips, if any, at the cash register or, of course, ask joy's permission to go. And the surprising thing is that you can walk out without permission, that the door opens, that the thick tropical night air parts to let me pass, that my car is still parked where I left it. There is no vindication in this exit, no fuck-you surge of

relief, just an overwhelming, dank sense of failure pressing down on me and the entire parking lot. I had gone into this venture in the spirit of science, to test a mathematical proposition, but somewhere along the line, in the tunnel vision imposed by long shifts and relentless concentration, it became a test of myself, and clearly I have failed. Not only had I flamed out as a housekeeper/server, I had even forgotten to give George my tips, and, for reasons perhaps best known to hardworking, generous people like Gail and Ellen, this hurts. I don't cry, but I am in a position to realize, for the first time in many years, that the tear ducts are still there, and still capable of doing their job.

When I moved out of the trailer park, I gave the key to number 46 to Gail and arranged for my deposit to be transferred to her. She told me that Joan is still living in her van and that Stu had been fired from the Hearthside I never found out what happened to George.

In one month, I had earned approximately \$1,040 and spent \$517 on food, gas, toiletries, laundry, phone, and utilities. If I had remained in my \$500 efficiency, I would have been able to pay the rent, and have \$22 left over (which is \$78 less than the cash I had in my pocket at the start of the month). During this time I bought no clothing except for the required slacks and no prescription drugs or medical care (I did finally buy some vitamin B to compensate for the lack of vegetables in my diet). Perhaps I could have saved a little on food if I had gotten to a super-market more often, instead of convenience stores, but it should be noted that I lost almost four pounds in four weeks, on a diet weighted heavily toward burgers and fries.

How former welfare recipients and single mothers will (and do) survive in the low-wage workforce, I cannot imagine. Maybe they will figure out how to condense their lives-including child-raising, laundry, romance, and meals-into the couple of hours between fulltime jobs. Maybe they will take up residence in their vehicles, if they have one. All I know is that I couldn't hold two jobs and I couldn't make enough money to live on with one. And I had advantages unthinkable to many of the long-term poor-health, stamina, a working car, and no children to care for and support. Certainly nothing in my experience contradicts the conclusion of Kathryn Edin and Laura Lein, in their recent book *Making Ends Meet: How Single Mothers Survive Welfare and Low-Wage Work*, that low-wage work actually involves more hardship and deprivation than life at the mercy of the welfare state. In the coming months and years, economic conditions for the working poor are bound to worsen, even without the almost inevitable recession. As mentioned earlier, the influx of former welfare recipients into the low-skilled workforce will have a depressing effect on both wages and the number of jobs available. A general economic downturn will only enhance, these effects, and the working poor will of course be facing it without the slight, but nonetheless often saving, protection of welfare as a backup.

The thinking behind welfare reform was that even, the humblest jobs are morally uplifting and psychologically buoying. In reality they are likely to be fraught with insult and stress. But I did discover one redeeming feature of the most abject low-wage work-the camaraderie of people who are, in almost all cases, far too smart and funny and caring for the work they do and the wages they're paid. The hope, Of course, is that someday these people will come to know what they're worth, and take appropriate action.

(reprint from Harper's)

-----Barbara Ehrenreich

THE DOT COM BOOM. THE RICH GET RICHER !ORGANIZE! ! ORGANIZE!

By Tommy S. in San Francisco

The boom does not exist for us. It happened for the top 10% of the country. And considering that, there was no 'boom', since the top 10% had ALREADY increased their wealth by 200% before the mid-90's 'new economy'. Under Reagan, Bush, and Clinton, it has been banging away for them the whole time! The upper class people invading all our cities now, increase the pressure on our already stagnant wages by buying up what was once rental housing, thus increasing rents. Still, only a few are the "really rich." They are not the ruling class. Many are speculators. But let me sift through all this and you can see where I'm going.

The evictions are real. The disappearing small businesses, even many that cater to the California middle class, are disappearing, and the most beautiful small city in the US is losing some of its guts, its vibrancy, its vigor. When the workers can't live in the city in which they work (and pay regressive taxes for years into some pot they never get to dip into to); when the light manufacturing companies and small businesses that employ them have to move, it is time to raise a mammoth cry of alarm. So pick the right targets. Who are the really rich? What forces are really moving the displacement here and in other cities?

The really rich. Those that make more in a year than if we won the lottery. Those that can buy million dollar properties just as a venture, as speculation. Those that can give millions to little 'start-up' companies and as if betting on horses, will bet on currency markets internationally. People locally such as the owner of the Gap who spent one million dollars to get Willie Brown elected. And on a smaller scale. O'Donoghue, who now through the Residential Builders Ass. gives tens or thousands to campaigns from New York to Sacramento.. Those that pay the Democrats and Republicans to enforce corporate control are the ruling class. Certainly we, as workers, renters, small business owners, are being assaulted by upper middle class capital. But who really insures that we break on the 'bust' of the cycle? The ruling class, the people that control billions of dollars with the help of corporate media and politicians and steer it to their own welfare payoffs, not to housing or social services. The upper class buying homes here all deserve some fear from us. Their arrogance alone speaks injustice (see landlord letters in another article). But they are not the target we should center on. Fight the impossible, demand it, or spin in circles with the little men and women who don't even really control the top-down class war upon us and workers worldwide.

It is important to get a realistic scope economically on what is happening. Too often, american radicals unversed in history, kneejerk in anecdotal on-the-street-evidence, unbelieving in the productivity of mass organization they splinter off into groups and can barely make a dent in their one issue politics. And too often american left-liberals, seeing themselves as radical, counter any real progressive change by co-opting or running one issue organizations since they are usually more wealthy, have more resources and time and thus quiet the radicals and assure all, as they believe, that there is enough in the pie for all. The democrat at the ballot box and back room meetings with the rich are usually their answer. The one-issue real radicals experience warranted fatigue and then retire.

The Mission Anti-Displacement organization is a perfect example of bottom up organizing that does not follow the above.

Rattlesnake #1- page 72

Within only 6 months, they forced issues to the front page of corporate newspapers, disrupted an important planning commission meeting for the public good....all without any semblance of give and take. Only with demands. They based themselves on what seems to me a 'traditional' urban anarchistic/socialist agenda. It is not just 'a one issue cause'. — The demands are concomitant with most urban struggles of the past 100 years—That construction be community based, with a huge increase of affordable housing for workers, that people of the communities be involved in the planning. That transit issues be addressed, that housing for workers be preserved and livable and attractive and people friendly. That the very nature of our neighborhoods be preserved and allowed to GROW in the same direction. Nobody in the MAC is going to do anything but support multi-unit affordable housing whereas the word preservation in California usually means whites in the suburban town outlawing multi-unit affordable housing. Most insidiously in LA those types of 'no growth laws' mean no browns or blacks in their little enclaves (see Mike Davis' books-City of Quartz, Ecology of Fear). The demands of the MAC were loud and clear. Housing for workers. No more huge ugly Office developments, and if even more commercial developments are forced into a residential working class neighborhood, they must pay the legally mandated fees, of which many dot.coms are avoiding by ABSURDLY getting outside, with corrupt politicians' help, the transit fees, etc charged to typical office projects.

I am just bringing up the MAC because of its present sense. Like I said, these demands have been voiced in every urban area for 100 years when enough democracy permits. Not so radical. Much of the words in the SF city charters say the same..preservation of character, affordable housing etc..... But as usual, you need angry people to get the laws enforced, when the laws restrain capital. What is good for the majority, has always been deemed a 'radical' demand. Chris Daly came out of this, and past activism, to almost win his district outright as supervisor in the new district elections. Half of us don't bother to vote, maybe with good reason, but on a face to face level, people like him get noticed. Ammiano won outright in district nine with the good common sense of the Mission. Matt Gonzalez faces a run-off, but another real person there.

That was the good the past year. The bad was democrats coming out in full force to defeat Proposition L. As typical of whore politicians, we got a glossy 11 x 17 mailer from Feinstein, Willie etc, saying vote against L. It had no information at all. Just their demand.

Arrogant as usual. And suitably ironic having a Feinstein quote. Her reign as mayor forced M to get passed. She was helping to build hundreds of ugly towering office buildings. For ten years after that 'boom' they had a 30 to 40% vacancy rate. Again, a politician (with her rich building contractor husband) ruined part of a city for a fast buck.

L on the ballot 11/2/00 now looking to be defeated by the conservative absentee ballots coming in, was a measure that was not even radical. It still allowed the 1 million square feet of office space...a cap under the 80's law prop. M, that had not even been breached since 1999, so obviously very liberal for the real estate scum. There is already millions of square feet of office space approved. It will be built. And millions more. A consortium of net/web companies says what is needed has already passed permit approval according to the SF Guardian. And 30% at least will become empty in the next recession. (1) In the present/mean time, the wealth and fast buck real estate lords have evicted hundreds of small businesses and light manufacturing firms. And once they move

they don't come back. It can take a year's profit for a small business to move. Huge corporations can actually make a profit by moving-though tax breaks, abatements and other corporate welfare scams.

It would seem perhaps, that I am playing one-issue but actually just showing how sensible community activated run organizations can be destroyed with capital's control.

The point is, capitalism does not and never has enriched the many. Only though government enforced laws, enacted always by mass organizing to force their hand, have we as 'americans' ever enjoyed higher wages, housing protection, and other social justice benefits. We have never been left and mass organized to stop wars, but we have slowed many of each wars' escalation.

More on the local: The SF Weekly had a completely unfactual right wing argument against rent control. They addressed residential rent control, claiming it restricted the housing market so that rents went sky high. Typical of their william f buckley and rush limbaugh type of journalism that they never mentioned there is NO commercial rent control. Business rents are going out of the reach of the small and middle too. And building for retail did not reach a cap all through the 90's. Something they didn't intend for readers to ponder I guess.

Here is my (usual) long winded letter that I wrote that did not get printed in reply to their Front page story that 'rent control does not work':

{ "Hello,

Not surprised at the free market leaning articles, but would like to add some focus down here from the ignorant left that votes pro-worker.

First, Byrne's case for ending rent control and letting the market take care of the 80% that cannot afford to buy is ludicrous and not factual. He implies that rent control slowed building, which caused multi-family housing stock to fall by 32%. A quick check of building permits for residential housing the past ten years shows an average of over 3,000 a year, and even INCREASING up to 5,000 in 98 alone. The total is 10,000 more units built than the 22,000 people that the USCB says moved here. So, should be a surplus! But not when you have very rich people buying up houses and booting out the tenants. Rich people demand more room and more profits. A two to three floor building that may have housed 8 to 15 tenants will then house only 2 or 3. If they have tenants they are renting to the people that can afford the ridiculous market rents; not families.

There is your 7,500 decrease of rental units cited by the USCB in the past 10 years, and add to it the negligence of the Brown administration to build more than has been lost of SRO rooms and 'welfare' projects. The latter point includes 100 units less just in my five block living area. Pretty crappy journalism when you don't compare numbers of housing sales with how many tenants were displaced by those sales.

Only one of the blind-knee-jerk tenant activists like Randy Shaw or James Tracey would think of giving me that information. The biggest joke of the whole article, that my friend Mike noted right away, was that Byrne never mentions the skyrocketing of commercial rents. Whoops- there is no commercial rent control! So why are those rents going sky-high if based on the false 'free-market' principle? And the cap on office space under Prop M, was only reached once in the past ten years-last year- as your paper noted. So, what happened there in that open market? Small businesses, community based, are being shut down all

over....the very lifeblood of any urban area in so many ways.

Rich people want a fast big return. They won't build housing that returns profit in 20 years, they have to have it in one or two years. That is why the majority of people try when given the chance, to put restraints on capital, and to demand as much as possible of non-profit oriented intervention in their day to day realms of housing, food prices, utilities, and transportation. How about the general strike in Bolivia last year when the water was privatized by a US corporation? Did we brainwash them all the way down there? You want affordable attractive housing? Get the city/federal government with our taxes and with non mob contractors and local artisans and community input to build it with no expectation of profit return. It works in Western Europe well (at least the non-profit part of it). You only see masses of homeless in Thatcher's/ Blair's UK.

Second, Mike Smith and he above have much in common. Deregulation of utilities? You have to be a reject from the totalitarian left, to turn so blindly free market disciple right. Our power and water supply should be left up to Chicago beef/wheat 1910's style of bidding and speculation and playing margins? No free market has even existed here, but I will warrant that the closest we came to was the 1860's to the early 1930's. An era that gave workers 60 hours a week at starvation wages, an outrageous mortality rate, the coal and steel trusts, and giveaways by the federal government to their patrons (Rail, big ranchers, coal etc) that is not been matched anywhere in the world in amounts of land and money except recently in the former USSR-inspired/directed sell off by Harvard economists. Maybe you would outlaw gov't subsidies in your free market? Then you would have to enact (anti-capital) laws. Whoops, there goes the idea of no gov't interference!

His reference to the seasonal prices of meat as an example or the free market approach is another absurdity. The meat industry is one of the most vertically integrated in the world. Their profits have increased 100% since the 70's, while prices have kept steady with inflation, while wages in packing plants have dropped from \$15 an hour to \$8. Hurray! Really, give us one historical example where your 'free market' did not turn into a monopoly or a group price fixing, that didn't cause slashed wages and cut backs on quality, environmental destruction and suffocating of small competitors that didn't have the initial capital to compete, though may have had a better healthier product. Government meat inspection cut back since the 80s, and guess what— E coli/salmonella breakouts everywhere! With deregulation laws on utilities enacted across the country since 1993, dirty coal burning plants are being fired up again, private (unaccountable) companies are buying up dangerous nuke plants.... and even Richard Cowart, an industry man, admitted before the House Subcommittee on Energy last fall that research on cleaner or renewable energy had dropped by 60% since 1993. The market really looked out for us on lead in gasoline and asbestos, you're going to tell me. In closing, I've seen this statement three times in your paper the past year, and still can't stop laughing ..'ask any economist and they will tell you...'

Yeah, economists are objective neutral scientists as much as sociologists, biogeneticists at Monsanto and editors running a right wing urban weekly. Har Har. Dudes, quote me some John Locke or Adam Smith and I will forget that we mined the gold, picked the cotton, built all these houses, and pay 50% more taxes than in the 60's,

while our incomes have remained stagnant since 1970, (please don't quote 'mean' income at me).... and I will turnover to your side.

We are "hoarding" our rent controlled spaces? Damn us greedy short sighted peasants! To think we expect to be able to live where we work and pay taxes."}-end of letter

No I didn't expect them to print it. And that is why you're reading this magazine. One problem with my citing of 'residential building permits' from the gov't pages for SF county: these permit figures don't jive with 'new units' that the papers cite. Chronicle/Examiner articles rarely mention permits or net vs gain, though as I said, that is the first place I would look. Today's paper (11/15/00 -Ex) says SF in 99 "managed to increase its supply of new dwellings by 1,285 last year, the biggest gain in nearly a decade." Although on page 12 it says "another 2,592 are in the pipeline meaning that building applications have been filed, that permits have been approved...". Several of the 5 'W's is missing. One is the 'how?' Is this NET increase of units? Meaning minus the rental units taken off the market by the rich occupying an entire house? And 'what'? Are these rental units? Do these numbers include the rebuilt projects that are finally (!) going up? (Of course not—Folsom and Chavez new attractive 'projects' would add 200 to 300 more units to the total figure—that new development at Chavez and Mission has 250 'units'-(2 people or 5 occupancy?) And the 'when'? When, in the 90's time frame did we see a loss of rental units and/or single purchase home buys vs. new rental and single purchase homes? It was a front page article too. They get paid a living wage for that shitty journalism. I'm just sitting here on the net with my thumb up my ass poking holes in it. The Examiner Graphics graph in the article is equally confusing. Our population in SF has grown at least 20,000 (maybe 30,000) in 10 years, but according to their little table only about a 9,000 'net gain' of housing has happened. That would mean we would have at least 10,000 people living somewhere!! (Besides the 5 to 8 thousand homeless we have had these ten years who have disappeared from public debate!). Meanwhile, we are crowding into housing even more which is no surprise to many of us(2).

I only waste this much space to reiterate what should be obvious and to warn readers. We can never trust our political leaders, or the mainstream press to give us facts. And it is very distressing I agree, that a paper that makes millions in profit a year cannot even write a complete housing article for us ...ever. They never have. I get more correct information from the little local New Mission News and of course the SFBayGuardian(2).

Back to the city: Small businesses, light manufacturing, availability of affordable housing all make cities 'livable'. And from a capitalistic sense, they increase the city coffers much more than corporate businesses—more dense employment, wages all being spent here, payroll taxes, sales tax etc. Unless we are talking about the massive speculation/trade in real estate that has been happening lately (bringing in transfer taxes), the dense small business tax base supports a city's structure. And tourism? What people will visit if half the city becomes half-empty modern office shells? Government laws in most of Europe keep those cities livable. Government subsidies in those cities are 200% higher than here. But we are still battered by the real estate mayor and the corporate press that runs the tired old line that the free market could take better care of us.

Our memories, our histories are not so juggled by the Francos of New Disneyland.

But before I go off, sounding like some Keynesian reformist, let's get back to this 'boom'.

Capitalism in the US— after a massive loss of living wage jobs

in the manufacturing sector (still holding at loss of over 30,000 a year now) in the 70's and 80's— has never looked so good according to the headlines and our politicians. They claim in California, we have re-entered a gold rush. The facts support nothing so. In truth, 3/4s of California have seen their status as citizens drop since the mid-70's. For a start on the general overview, turn to Doug Henwood, author of Wall Street, and editor of the excellent Left Business Observer monthly newsletter:

Putting Things in Perspective: From reading the magazines, you'd think that computer-related industries are the driving force behind U.S. employment growth. Since the June 1992 recession low, employment in computer services (which includes custom programming, prepackaged software, systems design, data processing, information retrieval, and maintenance and repair) has grown by 534,000 — or just 1 in 26 of the new jobs over the last 5 years. Communications services added another 52,000, and computer-related manufacturing (the machines themselves, plus semiconductors, and communications equipment) another 97,000 (which didn't even make up for the recession losses of the early 1990s). Putting them together, employment in the manufacture, programming, sale and deployment of computer and communications equipment accounts for just 5% of U.S. job growth since 1992. That pales next to the 20% accounted for by retail trade (which includes bars and restaurants as well as stores), 10% by state and local government, and the 9% each by health services and temp firms. Of course, gadgetry is transforming these and most other lines of work: cops are outfitted with radar guns and "suspect" databases, and fast food workers cook potatoes in computerized fryers — but we should be clear on just where the jobs really are. (3)

And for more perspective, within the USA's real boom era, as it rebuilt and resupplied post WW2 Europe and Japan, in one city alone, Detroit, there were over 330,000 manufacturing jobs in 1947. (And then only 180,000 by 1972 as automation and relocation for lower wages had taken hold.) This is California, with a population of over 35 million, and less than 200,000 new living wage jobs in the next FIVE years will be credited to the dot.com hype. So the majority of us feel no bang from the boom—the truth is the dot.com boom has created a miniscule fraction of high-paying jobs especially compared to the manufacturing boom of the 40's and 50's. There are many more millionaires to be sure, but no blip or bulge under the high-end 15 to 10 rich peoples' percentiles.

Take a look at the top major employers in SF County. Service and other low paying jobs outside of the managerial class and owners make up the vast majority, with one multi-national classified as construction: ABM Industries Inc Services to Buildings, ABM Janitorial Services, Services to Buildings, Airtouch Communications Inc, Telephone Communications, Bechtel Group Inc, Residential Building Construction, Catholic Health Care West, Services, Charles Schwab Corp, Security Brokers & Dealers, Chevron Corp, Oil & Gas Field Services, Del Monte Foods Co, Groceries & Related Products, Fritz Companies Inc, Freight Transportation Arrangement, Gap Inc, Family Clothing Stores, Levi Strauss & Co, Apparel, Piece Goods, & Notions, Levi Strauss North America, Men's & Boys' Furnishings, Macy's, Department Stores, McKesson HBOC Inc, Drugs, Proprietaries, & Sundries, P G & E Corp, Holding Offices, Pacific Bell, Telephone Communications, Pacific Gas & Electric Co, Combination Utility Services, URS Corp, Engineering & Architectural Services, Wells Fargo & Co, Holding Offices, Williams-Sonoma Inc, Department Stores.

Two 'computer related firms' show up in the Alameda county listing.

And it looks that our yearly future job growth will only come from the service sector, with wages at what should be inflation adjusted minimum wage (that would be over \$8 an hour)....or just 3 or 4 dollars more. Only about 10,000 will come directly from the computer tweaker types.

The State Employment Development Department lists show you, what we figure to be truth, outside of the constant harping about a boom. At the top, for SF county, there are projected openings for clinic medical techs starting at \$18 (70 count) and then registered nurses starting at \$18 (840). Systems Analysts (those jobs you hear people say 'someone' got starting at \$80,000) are listed in the state pages at starting at \$15.58 an hour which equals \$32,000 a year. Those are predicted to have an increase of 1,990 openings by 2001. Then they predict another couple thousand or more of computer engineers (start \$13.86) etc. The big gain through 2001? Accountants (start \$12.39-1,820 openings) hotel desk clerks (\$11.56- 650 openings), janitors! (\$9.51- 3,770 openings), general office clerks (\$9.09- 3,020 openings), and then secretaries at \$10.05 with 3,160 openings.

In Santa Clara county (San Jose) there are three times as many openings in computer related jobs (and it has a population twice the size) ...outside of electrical eng.'s (9,280 at \$18) many of which will disappear after all those buildings are finally built, and become empty. Santa Clara projects 6,420 more computer programmers needed at start of \$17. And then 6,570 secretaries at start of \$10!! A lot more registered nurses will be needed - 3,960 at \$20. If the mainstream press had any interest in 'labor' as it is called (the 75% of us) there would be constant articles about the need for nurses, teachers and janitors, electrical engineers and accountants, most at barely living wages, rather than the usual blather about another IPO millionaire, or another IPO backing off its opening date because of nervous stockholder, or the buzz among catered dot.com parties in someplace east of market street that none of us ever see. And of course the security state is always growing—projected for Santa Clara—1,240 more cops at \$18 start.

On the state CA gov't page, they project about another 160,000 computer related jobs and then in retail related (computer and office equipment) about another 40,000. This is of course not considering the very real possibility of a very deep recession soon due to over-speculation, and over-production.

So if the population is projected to rise by 3 million by 2005 this boom in dot.com jobs is so miniscule to be lubricious. (4) Looking at the US Census Bureau median wage level of the past ten years, looking at the Bureau of Labor stats, there is nothing that points to anything akin to boom. Only a slight recovery from the recession of 1990 and 1991.

It's a scam. It's a lie. Our papers are being written at the business desks, not by concerned journalists. The main writers and editors are mostly of the top 15% that are part of the speculation, and benefit some—that paper shuffling without real production. The top 5% really see big profit since they own 95% of all stocks, though the upper middle class are able to buy property and bank on some of the inflated stock prices, using credit to snatch it up—and using your wages from rent, or your defaulted/no raise wages that translate into more profits.

And where does the real bare face admittance come
Rattlesnake#1-page 75

from about the lie? From a front page story in the SF Chronicle? From your Democrat lesser-than-two-evils politicians?

Did we hear Willie say, "Well the boom only benefits the top 10 percent so I guess we should build housing and...." No! The mainstream rebuttal comes from the Economic Review 2000 published by the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco.

It's bureaucratic and over 20 pages long. But cogent nonetheless. The 1990's is the first time since the 1960's that 85% of Californians are BELOW the rest of the US in family income. It states "that a larger number of Californians were in poverty and a smaller number were in the middle class than in 1989." So, not only more poverty, but less in the middle class, which is made up of mostly white people. This has happened in the past 10 years in a state so huge economically that it could rank as the 10th largest nation in the world by wealth. This has happened with uncountable stories about the tech boom here.

The richest state in the country, in the richest country in the world didn't even boost the middle class during this ten year boom. The only asset the white middle class has got here is that their property, if they own, has increased in value so much. Ho-de-ho! What these voters don't know!

A complete ruling class farce. They perpetuate it, to make you think you are alone, and unworthy if you aren't making that 'dot.com' wage you keep hearing about. It's only a few people that make over a teachers' or cops' salary. Really. Your government number counters have all the info for you. But the press and the leaders never speak truth.

This farce is even more dangerous if we don't see what lies ahead. Both parties have cut all services down to the bare bones. Welfare term limits, thanks to Clinton/Gore will put millions more in absolute poverty. A boom for the minority, and a bust for us, in that we have jobs, but they don't pay more and even less than the early 60's. When unemployment goes up to 10% or more, we will really be hard-up. Wages will drastically lower (or not keep pace with inflation as through the 70's and 80's) with the thousands competing for your job. The city has not collected any increased taxes on the small amount of filthy rich when it had the chance.

The recent surplus is transfer tax, which will disappear when the real estate market bottoms out. So no increased money for housing etc now, and then they will just be able to say there is no money.

San Francisco has had the highest concentration of millionaires for decades considering it's small population. That wealth before us colors all our perception. Even the radicals think it trickles down to the middle class people with cell-phones, those wearing golf club clothes and barking at service sector workers, those with temporary surplus to spend, those that haven't had kids yet.

But it doesn't. Even if those 20 somethings put on airs like their shit is gilded in silicon chips, they don't know this 'new economy' is just a spurt. They got no better education than us on capitalism in state schools. They don't know median wage over the past 40 years, that really most of them are only making what is relatively a factory wage from the late 50's (for whites anyway),,,,, they don't know cycles of recession/depressions. Some of them bug us urban folks with this arrogance based in ignorance. But instead of wrongly associating them with the top 20 percent; educate them instead.

Unionize the minority that will go with it. No way around it. The small percentage of high paid jobs available here in the 'hot-bed' will go over-shores, or shrink. Technology will eradicate a quarter of the jobs. Consolidation will wipe out another quarter. Teach them 150 years of history. Tell them the only web site they should know in life is exploitation.com.

A worker is a worker. Let them prove to you they feel different. One by One.

The others ...well.... it was always the petty bourgeoisie that first supported fascism in Spain, Germany and Italy.

endnote SF Examiner may 21 99

(bay area in a housing crisis headline in bus section)

"Out of a projected need for 182,543 (Bay Area Council, a business based public policy org) bay area housing units, only 101,490 had been built since 88. For those in the lower income brackets, that shortfall was even more severe. Out of a projected need of 36,000 units only 9,000 were built." This is in a time when our cities have budget surpluses!!!! Increase taxes on those making high salaries, increase corporate taxes! Make them build it!! HOUSING!

NOTES

(1)SF Bay Guardian: .."City has approved 4 million sq ft of office space since beginning of 2000, added to the 3 million already approved before 2000. SFBG—a figure put out by high-tech industry lobbyists— only 2.5 million more square feet needed. So 4 million square feet with no tenants???? Oh that will be pretty for our neighborhoods.

(2)Crowding

Occupied		Crowded units		Severely crowded housing units	
1960		(1.01 or more)		(1.51 or more)	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
CA	4,982,108	475,287	9.5%	121,173	2.4%
1990		Crowded units		Severely crowded housing units	
		(1.01 or more)		(1.51 or more)	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
US	91,947,410	4,548,799	4.9%	1,911,867	2.1%
CA	10,381,206	1,275,377	12.3%	737,247	7.1%

(3)7/17/97 (#78). For more info on LBO, or sub info, see http://www.panix.com/~dhenwood/LBO_home.html

(4)(Population growth in thousands)

SERIES A	July 1, 1995	July 1, 2000	July 1, 2005	July 1, 2015	July 1, 2025
California	31,589	32,521	34,441	41,373	49,285

(so 3 million more in five years)

1998 Income of some of the highest -paid entertainers.
Jerry Seinfeld 225 million, Steven Spielberg 175 million, Jamers Caermon 155 million (director of Titanic), Tim Allen (Home Improvement) 77 million, Harrison Ford 58 million, Rolling Stones 57 million, Robin Williams 56 million, , Celine Dion 55 million, Mike Judge (king of the Hill) 53 million, David Copperfield 49 million....down to #24 Drew Carey 45 million, Eddie Murphy 47 million, John Travolta 47 million.. ...#32 Nicolas Cage 38 million, #38 Metallica 32 million...Helen Hunt 31 million...

The Texas Death Machine

BY ALEXANDER COCKBURN

reprinted from COUNTERPUNCH Newsletter

Being charged with a capital crime is surely bad news anywhere but there's no place worse than Texas. After the state Board of Pardons turned down Karla Faye Tucker's petition, she became the 146th person executed by Texas after the Supreme Court voted to reinstate the death penalty in 1976. Texas is also a trendsetter when it comes to killing the mentally retarded and children. (Incidentally, the death penalty does not appear to be a deterrent in Texas. Murder rates in Dallas, Houston and San Antonio are higher than they are in New York, where the death penalty was reinstated only last year.)

Texas, though, merely reflects what is true nationwide. The chance that a person charged with a capital crime will live or die depends enormously on race, social class and perhaps most importantly of all, where the crime was committed. In calling for a moratorium on the death penalty last year, the American Bar Association said, "Today, administration of the death penalty, far from being fair and consistent, is instead a haphazard maze of unfair practices with no internal consistency."

For this report, we're grateful to Stephen Bright of the Southern Center for Human Rights in Atlanta and two death penalty lawyers in Texas, David Dow and Brent Newton, who provided us with much of the information in this article.

When it comes to the death penalty, Texas is in a league of its own and the situation there is growing worse. Of the 146 people executed in the state since the death penalty was reinstated, 37 were killed in 1997 alone. Racism plays a huge role in determining who dies. In one glaring example, Texas law enforcement authorities picked Clarence Lee Brandley from among many suspects in a circumstantial case of rape and murder of a white woman. As authorities told Brandley- convicted but released in 1989 after being exonerated-"You're the nigger, so you're elected". Dallas has sent dozens of people to death row but never for killing an African American. Harris County (Houston) alone is home to 40 percent of all African Americans in Texas on death row. Blacks make up only 20 percent of the county's population but about two-thirds of its death row inmates.

Texas also boasts a number of mad dog district attorneys. In Dallas, the DA's office prepared a manual for new prosecutors, used until the early 1990s, which said: "You are not looking for a fair juror, but rather a strong, biased and sometimes hypocritical individual who believes that Defendants are different from them in kind, rather than degree...You are not looking for any member of a minority group which may subject him to suppression-they almost always empathize with the accused...Minority races almost always empathize with the Defendant."

Houston has executed more people since the re-imposition of the death penalty than any state except, of course, Texas. The Texas Observer recently dubbed Huntsville prison near Houston, where Karla Faye Tucker was executed, "the most active human abattoir in North America." The man most responsible for this dubious distinction is Johnny Holmes, who has headed the local DA's office since 1979. Holmes hangs a sign in his office's death penalty unit entitled "The Silver Needle Society" which contains a list of all the people killed by lethal injection in the county. Holmes's office also reportedly throws champagne parties on the night of scheduled executions.

Texas DAs are exceeded in their zeal for the death penalty only by Texas judges. The most famous case is that of Harris County District Judge William Harmon. During the 1991 trial of Carl Wayne Buntion, Harmon told the defendant that he was "doing God's work" to see that he was executed. According to a law review

article by Brent Newton: "Harmon taped a photograph of the 'hanging saloon' of the infamous Texas hanging judge Roy Bean on the front of his judicial bench, in full view of prospective jurors. Harmon superimposed his own name over the name Judge Roy Bean that appeared on the saloon, undoubtedly conveying the obvious."

Harmon also laughed at one of Buntion's character witnesses and attacked an appeals court as "liberal bastards" and "idiots" after it ruled that he must allow the jury to consider mitigating evidence. In a 1994 case, the defense requested that a number of death row inmates be brought to the courthouse. "Could we arrange for a van to blow up the bus on the way down here?" Harmon asked.

Another reason Texas kills so many people is the abysmal quality of many of its court-appointed attorneys. Attorneys in Texas have been drunk during trial (one even had to file an appellate brief from the drunk tank), had affairs with the wives of defendants, and not raised a single objection during an entire trial. In all these cases, appeals courts have ruled that defendants were provided with a competent defense.

In three death penalty cases in Houston, defense attorneys fell asleep during trial (as Stephen Bright says, "this gives new meaning to the term dream team"). The trial judge refused to dismiss the case of George McFarland, convicted of a robbery-killing, by saying that the state had fulfilled its obligation of providing McFarland with counsel and "the Constitution doesn't say the lawyer has to be awake". An appeals court in Texas upheld the death sentence on McFarland and the Supreme Court refused to review the case.

Attorney Joe Frank Cannon has represented ten men sentenced to death. "Represent" here is a generous description. In the case of Calvin Burdine, the court clerk testified that Cannon "was asleep on several occasions on several days over the course of the proceedings". Cannon's entire file on the case consisted of three pages of notes. (The prosecutor in that case urged the jury to choose death over life in prison because Burdine was homosexual. "We all know what goes on inside of prisons, so sending him there would be like sending him to a party", he said.) During the past eight years, only the United States, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq and Yemen have executed children (those who were under 18 at the time of the crime).

Texas is a leader in the practice of killing children. Johnny Frank Garrett was executed in 1992 for the rape-murder of a Catholic nun, committed when he was 17. As a child, Garrett was beaten by a series of stepfathers and seated on a hot stove because he would not stop crying. He was sodomized by a number of adults and forced to perform pornographic acts (including having sex with a dog) on film.

Garrett suffered from paranoid schizophrenia and while on Death Row regularly conversed with a dead aunt. Karla Faye Tucker got two abstentions from the Texas Board of Pardons and Parole; Garrett, executed in 1992, was shut out 17-0.

Joseph John Cannon sits on Death Row in Texas for a crime he committed as a teenager. He suffered serious head injuries after being hit by a truck when he was four and subsequently spent years in an orphanage. Between the ages of seven and seventeen, Cannon was sexually abused regularly by his stepfather

and grandfather. At the age of fifteen he tried to kill himself by drinking insecticide. None of this information was presented to the jury in Cannon's case.

How to account for the singularity of Texas? We talked to A. Richard Ellis, an attorney based in San Francisco who handles death penalty appeals in states including California and Texas. He underlines the coincidence in Texas of two lethal traditions, namely southern racism and hang 'em high frontier justice. Though Ellis stressed that there are dedicated lawyers of high quality in Texas, such as those working in the Texas Resource Center (which like other such appeals projects across the country lost its federal funding in 1995), the general level of legal representation in Texas is awful. "I've seen incredibly slipshod work there. A man on Death Row just sent me his state habeas appeal, which he saw as a ticket to lethal injection and he was right. It was 50 large-type pages of illiterate nonsense, and this from an attorney who lectures on habeas!"

Ellis says the state habeas appeal these days is often a convicted person's only chance at reprieve, in which fact-driven issues (such as ineffective counsel) impinging on a person's constitutional right to a fair trial can be raised. "In California, an appeals attorney can regard \$35,000 as a reasonable (state-provided) opening budget, with the whole budget going to \$150,000 and up. I just had a Texas case where I needed to get an expert witness, which could cost around \$15,000. The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals gave me a total budget for the entire appeal of \$5,000." Of course, appeals face desperately long odds in all states. But in California, which actually has more people on Death Row than Texas-477 to 428-there are far more lawyers and investigators working to keep their clients alive. As a result, California has only executed four people since the death penalty was reinstated, a fraction of the number killed in Texas.

Texas is the only state where a judge or state attorney general can set an execution date long before the appeals process has been exhausted. Ellis noted one case where a condemned man saw his federal appeal go through district court, circuit court and the US Supreme Court in less than a month, with the last two appeals occurring on the day of his execution. The Supreme Court finally granted a stay 45 minutes after the scheduled hour of his death (authorities were good enough to delay the injection while they waited for a ruling to come down). California is as eager as Texas to kill people. But there's a large and active legal opposition, plus the all-important presence of money. As Ellis points out, "In California, I can have a co-counsel. In Texas, I'm the whole team. Texas is an unbelievable death machine."

A Brazen Racial Animus

To be sure, Texas faces stiff competition in laying claim to the title of the Death State. In Georgia, all 46 state district attorneys-who alone are charged with deciding whether to seek the death penalty-are white while 40 percent of those sentenced to death since 1976 have been black. No white person has been executed for the murder of a black in Georgia, nor has the death penalty ever been sought in such a case. Of the 12 blacks executed in Georgia since 1983, six were sentenced in cases where prosecutors had succeeded in removing all potential black jurors. Nor does the warden of Georgia's state prison system, a mortician, inspire great confidence. After being appointed he declared that many prisoners in the state are not fit to kill. He later led a raid on one penitentiary in which, according to 18 employees, prisoners who were handcuffed or otherwise restrained were beaten.

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that people sentenced

to death are not entitled to representation after the post-conviction phase. Georgia was the first state to take advantage of this decision when in 1996, it ordered Exzanavious Gibson, a man with an IQ of 80, to defend himself.

Eddie Lee Ross, a black man, was defended by a court-appointed attorney who had served as the Imperial Wizard of the KKK for 50 years. Ross's lawyer fell asleep repeatedly during the trial, failed to make any objections, filed no pre-trial motions and missed numerous court dates. Ross got the death penalty. James Messner, who was brain damaged, was electrocuted on July 28, 1988, after his own attorney suggested in closing arguments that the death penalty might, in fact, be the appropriate sentence.

In the case of William Hance, a black, the jury was deadlocked at 11-1 for death with the lone hold out being a woman named Ms. Daniels, the only black on the panel. Death sentences must be unanimous in Georgia so the other jurors began pressuring Daniels. One said, "We need to get it over with because tomorrow's mother's day". Daniels refused to budge but the foreman sent the judge a note saying the jury had voted for death. Despite an affidavit from Daniels, Hance went to the electric chair in 1994.

Virginia executes more people than any other state but Texas-42 since the death penalty was reinstated. The situation in the town of Danville, the last capital of the Confederacy, is instructive in regard to how the death penalty is imposed in the state. According to the Richmond Times-Dispatch, since being incorporated in 1890 every person executed in the town has been African-American.

Danville's chief prosecutor is William Fuller III, has sent seven men, all black, to death row. That's one less than the number of men condemned to death row in Richmond, a city with a population almost four times higher. Fuller has charged eight people in Danville with capital murder, 16 blacks and two whites. He sought the death penalty for eight of the African-Americans and none of the whites. "Danville's criminal justice system is an unconstitutional embarrassment," lawyers for Ronald Watkins, one of the condemned, wrote in a pending appeal to a federal court. "The brazen racial animus that fuels the death penalty machine in Danville should be acknowledged and neutralized."

The situation is not much better elsewhere. In Philadelphia, legal representation for people facing the death penalty is so poor that officials in charge of the system told the Philadelphia Inquirer that they would not want such lawyers to handle their case in traffic court. In Alabama, the maximum fee allowed to a court-appointed attorney is \$2,000. "I once defended a capital case [in Alabama] and was paid so little that I could have gone to McDonald's and flipped hamburgers and made more than I made defending someone whose life was at stake," says Bright. In South Carolina, the state attorney general campaigned on a platform that called for replacing the electric chair with an electric sofa in order to speed the pace of executions.

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Introduction by Noam Chomsky to *Bridge of Courage*

"People turn to armed struggle when they do not see an alternative. Of all the people I have known who went down that path, none did so because they wanted it. They didn't spend time debating the ethics of it because to them it was obvious. Ending violence means resolving the situation which gives rise to it."

These remarks were made by Ruben Zamora, the courageous Salvadoran democrat, speaking in Northern Ireland in September 1992. Nowhere are his words more apt than Guatemala, whose rulers for the past 40 years could comfortably rub shoulders with Himmler and Mengele. Commenting in 1990 on the "velvet revolution" in Czechoslovakia, Guatemalan journalist Julio Godoy—who had fled his Country a year earlier when his recently reopened newspaper was blown up by state terrorists—observed that Eastern Europeans are, "in a way, luckier than Central Americans

While the Moscow-imposed government in Prague would downgrade and humiliate reformers, the Washington-made government in Guatemala would kill them. It still does, in a virtual genocide that has taken more than 150,000 victims... [in what Amnesty International calls a "government program of political murder."

That, he suggested, is "the main explanation for the fearless character of the students' recent uprising in Prague: the Czechoslovak Army doesn't shoot to kill... In Guatemala, not to mention El Salvador, random terror is used to keep unions and peasant associations from seeking their own way." There is an "important difference in the nature of the armies and of their foreign tutors." In the Soviet satellites, the armies were "apolitical and obedient to their national government," while in the U.S. satellites, "the army is the power," doing what they have been trained to do for many decades by their foreign tutor and its client states. "One is tempted to believe that some people in the White House worship Aztec gods—with the offering of Central American blood." They have created

and backed forces in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua that "can easily compete against Nicolae Ceausescu's Securitate for the World Cruelty Prize."

Guatemala had long endured the "culture of fear" imposed by the military and oligarchy. During the years of FDR's "Good Neighbor Policy," the lash was field by Jorge Ubico, a brutal and murderous dictator whose advent to the Presidency in 1931 was heartily welcomed by the U.S. embassy, concerned, as was the Guatemalan elite, by "a great deal of unrest among the working classes." Ubico legalized the (conventional) murder of Indians by landowners, destroyed the union movement and proscribed mention of such phrases as "trade union" or "labor rights," eliminated any shreds of democracy, and created a highly efficient system of repression and control based on what a U.S. official called his "Guatemalan Gestapo." He was, however, very gracious to U.S. corporations and offered a leading role to U.S. military officers. His frank admiration for Hitler and Mussolini aroused some concerns in the late 1930s, but generally "the American press displayed warm appreciation for Jorge Ubico," historian Piero Gleijeses observes, while the Roosevelt administration maintained its "steadfast ... approval" for the dictator until the last months of his rule, backing away as he began to lose control—the standard pattern, routinely offering the occasion for odes to our love for democracy and human rights.

The grip of the "culture of fear" was finally broken in 1944, when the dictatorship was overthrown and the country entered a decade of democracy and social progress, "A new wind was stirring the Guatemalan countryside," Gleijeses writes: "The culture of fear was loosening its grip over the great masses of the Guatemalan population. In a not un-reachable future, it might have faded away, a distant nightmare." Under President Jacobo Arbenz's agrarian reform, half a million people received desperately needed land, the first time in the history of the country that "the Indians were offered land, rather than being robbed of it."

The awakening from the nightmare in Guatemala aroused the "culture of fear" in Washington. In 1949, the CIA reported "two areas of instability" in Latin America, Bolivia and Guatemala, both threatened by regimes that showed concern for the overwhelming majority of their populations. The CIA elaborated on Guatemalan "instability" in a 1952 report, warning that the "radical and nationalist policies" of the government had gained "the support or acquiescence of almost all Guatemalans." Worse yet, the government was proceeding "to mobilize the hitherto politically inert peasantry" and to create "mass support for the present regime." The government was attaining these goals by labor organization, agrarian and other social reform, and nationalist policies "identified with the Guatemalan revolution of 1944." The revolution had aroused "a strong national movement to free Guatemala from the military dictatorship, social backwardness, and 'economic colonialism' which had been the pattern of the past", it "inspired the loyalty and conformed to the self-interest of" most politically conscious Guatemalans." The democratic programs of the government offered tire public a means to participate in achieving these goals, which ran directly counter to the interests of the oligarchy and U.S. agribusiness.

The irresolvable conflict between the goals of the democratic revolution and U.S. policies was spelled out with great clarity by the National Security Council immediately after a CIA coup had destroyed Guatemalan democracy, imposing a reign of terror that far surpassed the achievements of Washington's friend Ubico. The major threat to U.S. inter-

ests, the nation's top planning body explained, is posed by "nationalistic regimes" that are responsive to popular pressures for "immediate improvement in the low living standards of the masses" and diversification of their economics. This tendency conflicts not only with the need to "protect our resources" (as George Kennan put it, referring to what is rightfully ours though by irrelevant accident beyond our borders), but also with our concern to encourage "a climate conducive to private investment" and "in the case of foreign capital to repatriate a reasonable return." The Kennedy administration later identified the roots of U.S. interests in Latin America as in part military (the Panama canal, strategic raw materials, etc.), but perhaps still more "the economic root whose central fiber is the \$9 billion of private U.S. investment in the area" and extensive trade relations. The need "to protect and promote American investment and trade," the NSC continued, is threatened by nationalism; that is, efforts to follow an independent course. The U.S. prefers agroexport models serving the interests of U.S.-based corporations (agribusiness, pesticide and fertilizer producers, and so on), and in later years, assembly plants that can provide U.S. investors with cheap labor, requiring a repressive climate. "Economic science" is always at hand to demonstrate that whatever doctrines happen to benefit Western power are just those that will eventually contribute to the welfare of the subject population--"eventually" referring to "the long run," when we are all dead, as Keynes famously put it. This miraculous coincidence between the conclusions of "economic science" and the self-interest of the wealthy and powerful arouses no more attention than the regular refutation of the theories, from the (lays of the British in Bengal, Ireland, and elsewhere until the catastrophe of capitalism that devastated traditional colonial domains of the West in the 1980s, and is now having the familiar effects in Eastern Europe, much of it at last returned to its former quasi-colonial status.

The guiding doctrines of U.S. policy have never been popular among the targeted populations, a sign, perhaps, of the "low level of intellectualism" deplored by the CIA in observations to which we return. The confrontation in Latin America came to a head as World War II was ending and the U.S. was proceeding to establish the rules of the new world order it intended to dominate. Each region had its place. The Third World generally was reassigned to its traditional service role, each region serving its specific "function." Latin America was to be taken over by the United States, its rivals Britain and France expelled.

At the Chapultepec (Mexico) hemispheric conference in February 1945, Washington called for "An Economic Charter of the Americas" that would eliminate economic nationalism "in all its forms." Latin America, in contrast, upheld "The philosophy of the New Nationalism," as a State Department officer termed it, a policy that "embraces policies designed to bring about a broader distribution of wealth and to raise the standard of living of the masses." State Department Political Adviser Laurence Duggan wrote that "Economic nationalism is the common denominator of the new aspirations for industrialization. Latin Americans are convinced that the first beneficiaries of the development of a country's resources should be the people of that country."

That curious idea won few accolades in Washington,

where it was understood that the "first beneficiaries" should be U.S. investors. Latin America is to complement the needs of the U.S. economy--or more accurately, those who control it--in accordance with the principles of economic science. Accordingly, Latin America should not undergo what the Truman and Eisenhower administrations called "excessive industrial development," meaning development that infringes on the interests of U.S. investors (development that might compete with foreign capital was not deemed "excessive," therefore allowed). Given the power relations, the U.S. position prevailed, with predictable consequences for the region generally.

In this context, one can understand the threat of Guatemalan democracy with its stubborn commitment to the heresy that "the first beneficiaries of the development of a country's resources should be the people of that country." Plainly, such ideas and those who espoused them had no place in the emerging new world order.

Still more ominous was the threat that Guatemalan "instability" might "destabilize" others, who might be impressed by what the democratic reforms were achieving. Guatemala could become what U.S. planners call a "rotten apple" that will "spoil the barrel," a "virus infecting others," a "domino" that might "topple the row." In May 1953, a senior Pentagon official, General Richard Partridge, reported that the "drastic reforms which [Arbenz] is implementing do affect the neighboring countries which are only slightly less overdue for reforms of a similar nature. That explains the great concern of the neighboring countries over his activities." A few months later, as the U.S. campaign to eradicate the virus was in progress, a State Department official warned that Guatemala has become an increasing threat to the stability of Honduras and El Salvador. Its agrarian reform is a powerful propaganda weapon; its broad social program of aiding the workers and peasants in a victorious struggle against the upper classes and large foreign enterprises has a strong appeal to the populations of Central American neighbors where similar conditions prevail. "Stability," in short, means the security of "the upper classes and large foreign enterprises" in whose interests policy is designed. As guardian of order, the U.S. cannot tolerate such "instability," particularly when the infection shows signs of spreading, inspiring others to consider the needs of peasants and workers. As President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles contemplated the danger to global security posed by Guatemala, they were given the first evidence of the spread of the virus: it was possible, they were informed, that "a strike situation" in Honduras might "have had inspiration and support from the Guatemalan side of the border."

Guatemala's aggression having thus been established, Washington had ample justification to impose a blockade to cleanse the hemisphere of this abomination. The blockade would not be in violation of international law, Attorney General Herbert Brownell assured the President, because the "self-defense and self-preservation" of the United States were at risk under these grave circumstances. The blockade would therefore fall under article 51 of the UN Charter, which permits self-defense against armed attack until the Security Council has time to act against the threat to peace by Guatemala. Such is the nature of international law, in the real world.

The basic problem, Gleijeses concludes in his scholarly study, was that Arbenz's "agrarian reform was proceeding well, the PGT [Communist Guatemala Workers Party to which Arbenz was close, though not a member] was gaining popular support, and basic freedoms were being upheld. It was an intolerable challenge to America's self-respect." And, self-respect aside, these developments were in dramatic conflict with the explicit principles guiding policy, as already noted.

To be sure, the ritual reasons were trotted out to justify U.S. actions: the Soviet threat that served as a useful reflex from the Bolshevik takeover in 1917. The credibility of this appeal can readily be assessed by a look at what immediately preceded 1917, and what immediately followed the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, eliminating any conceivable Soviet threat. In 1915-16, Woodrow Wilson, pursuing his commitment to self-determination, launched bloody and destructive Marine invasions of Haiti and the Dominican Republic in defense against "the Huns"-by accident, turning the two countries into U.S. plantations-, earlier subversion and aggression was in defense against the British, the Chileans, the Spanish, and on back to the "merciless Indian savages" of the Declaration of Independence, in its most shameful passages. As the Soviet system disappeared from history, George Bush celebrated the fall of the Berlin Wall by invading Panama to restore the rule of a tiny European clique of bankers and narcotraffickers, who could be kept in power only "under the mantle of United States protection," as Washington recognized.⁷ The Soviet threat having vanished beyond resurrection, Bush was courageously defending the United States against the arch-maniac Noriega. From 1917 to 1989 the "Soviet threat" was deployed to justify support for European fascism, a wide range of Third World monsters, and endless atrocities around the globe, on grounds so flimsy as to scarcely merit refutation.

The meaning of all of this can hardly escape a sane observer. But the natural conclusions, however transparent, are largely beyond the pale; within the bounds of the reigning Political Correctness, we may speak of "errors," "naivete," "exaggerated fears," and the like, but nothing more. The record provides a remarkable example of how near-totalitarian effects can be achieved in a very free society.

It is indeed true that Communists were active during the Guatemalan democratic revolution of 1944-54, "almost certainly no more than 4,000, and perhaps substantially fewer," according to a 1955 U.S. intelligence summary (NIE, July 26, 1955). As Gleijeses noted, "basic freedoms were being upheld," including tolerance of a wide range of opinion. Such excessive liberalism has always been anathema to U.S. leaders, whose concept of democracy requires guarantees that there will be no challenge, however slight, to business control of the political system. A secret State Department intelligence report of 1955 explained the problem: the democratic leadership that had thankfully been overthrown had "insisted upon the maintenance of an open political system," thus allowing the communists to "expand their operations and appeal effectively to various sectors of the population." Neither the military "nor selfseeking politicians" were able to overcome this disorder of the body politic. Evidently, in the face of this threat, the global guardian of democracy could not refrain from intervention to restore "stability."

The Communists ("prominent journalists, congressmen, labor leaders, senior members" of the left political parties) were notable for "a combination of dynamism, intellect, and integrity that was and would remain unequalled in Guatemalan politics," Gleijeses writes, noting that these were precisely the conclusions of the U.S. embassy at the time as well as of journalists and scholars "whose anti-communist credentials are above suspicion." The Communist leaders "were very honest, very committed," a high U.S. embassy official commented: "This was the tragedy: the only people who were committed to hard work were those who were, by definition, our worst enemies." They were "our worst enemies" because they had entirely the wrong concept of who should be "the first beneficiaries of the development of a country's resources," as already discussed. Whether they

were technically "communists" or not scarcely mattered. As Gleijeses aptly comments, "Just as the Indian was branded a savage beast to justify his exploitation, so those who sought social reform were branded communists to justify their persecution," a pattern so common throughout the world as scarcely to merit notice.

The problem of demonstrating the threat of Communism was addressed forthrightly by U.S. embassy officer John Hill, who advised that the planned blockade would "enable us to stop ships including our own to such an extent that it will disrupt Guatemala's economy." That would lead either to a pro-U.S. coup or to increased Communist influence; the latter would in turn "justify ... the U.S. to take strong measures," unilaterally if necessary. We thus seek to destroy the Guatemalan economy so as to provoke either a coup restoring our control or some Communist reaction that will justify our violent response-in self-defense. This plan extends the earlier one: to keep Guatemala under constant threat, depriving it of any means of self-defense in the hope that it will appeal to the Russians for support as a last resort, in which case our blockade may unearth evidence of Russian shipment of arms to Guatemala, sure proof that it is about to conquer the hemisphere, entitling us to respond in self defense.

The general technique has been adopted routinely, often with extreme clumsiness, but with little fear of exposure in a highly conformist political and intellectual culture, as the long record in Latin America and elsewhere demonstrates. Hill's proposal illustrates the fact that more intelligent elements are aware of the fraud used to beguile others and to defend oneself from unpleasant reality, though many are able to convince themselves of what it is convenient to believe, a talent that is useful for access to privilege and prestige.

Washington had for a time toyed with the possibility that Arbenz might be acceptable as President, despite his association with the much-despised democratic revolution that had been led by Juan Jose Arevalo, elected President in 1945. A 1949 analysis held that Arbenz was "essentially an opportunist" and "basically of an autocratic character." He had "no admixture of Indian blood" and "no real sympathy for the lower classes or for the many outside communists who have infiltrated Guatemala." Our kind of guy, in short. There was a chance that he might prove to "be a strong dictator ... who could be truly ruthless if necessary" and would "rid Guatemala of its leftist penetration" and "remove from Guatemala some of the truly liberal gains of the revolution." His assumption of power "would probably mean the end of the coercion of U.S. capital, a return of Guatemala to cooperation with the United States, and the end of any personal freedom in Guatemala."

"The thrust of the argument was clear," Gleijeses comments: Arbenz was an unsavory character with whom the United States could work well." But he soon "betrayed the hopes of the Truman administration," failing to be the "cynic" and "opportunist the Americans anticipated" and moving quickly to implement Latin America's first significant agrarian reform. "The more he accomplished, the closer he came to his destruction and the destruction of his dream."

The destruction was consummated with the U.S.-run coup and aggression in June 1954. At home, "Republicans and Democrats sang the appropriate chorus in impressive bipartisan harmony," Gleijeses comments, while "the American press leaped into collective self-delusion and ardently embraced the lies of the State Department." The New York

Times, fulfilling its role as the semi-official newspaper, was particularly servile and ridiculous, notably its leading thinker of the day, Arthur Krock. The reaction in Latin America and Europe was quite different, except for the dictatorships of Trujillo and Somoza; under the latter, even La Prensa, then an independent newspaper, shamelessly parroted the most vulgar U.S. propaganda.

For years, the New York Times, like its lesser colleagues, had been obediently following the line laid down by the State Department and the United Fruit Company (UFCO). Describing UFCO's success in shaping U.S. perceptions, its chief Public Relations officer Thomas McCann commented that "it is difficult to make a convincing case for manipulation of the press when the victims proved so eager for the experience." Despite the miserable record, however, Eisenhower and Dulles were still not satisfied. They privately expressed their rage at the behavior of the Times and sought-successfully it appears-to have its correspondent Sydney Gruson removed for the period of the coup. The Soviet high command and top party officials were no less enraged by the lack of patriotism shown by the Soviet press during the invasion of Afghanistan."

The consequences of the U.S. takeover were devastating. Some 8,000 peasants were murdered in two months in a terror campaign that targeted particularly UFCO union organizers and Indian village leaders. The U.S. embassy participated with great fervor, providing lists of "Communists" to be eliminated or imprisoned and tortured while Washington dedicated itself to making Guatemala "a showcase for democracy." The embassy was particularly outraged that 5 of the 11 members of the PGT Political Commission remained at large. "Of these eleven men, three are alive today," Gleijeses writes, the rest having been tortured and murdered, some dropped into the ocean from army transports after they were killed, which may have at least partially satisfied American blood lust. The Arbenz reforms were completely reversed and the democratic system shattered, never to recover, except in form. The nightmare returned, far more grim even than before. 12

As these procedures were running their course, the New York Times praised the coup leader, Castillo Armas, for his "sound decisions" and "progressive policies." The editors felt some qualms when Armas was elected president in October 1954 with 99.99% of the vote in a plebiscite run by the army. But, ever judicious, they cautioned against premature concern: "It is doubtless unfair to expect anything else so soon after a revolution against a Communist - dominated regime." The National Intelligence Estimate of July 26, 1955, on "probable developments in Guatemala" detected an impressive commitment of the military regime to "democratic forms and practices, to land reform, to the development of a modern economy, and to the protection of a free labor movement and other social gains." It simultaneously recognized that in the irrelevant real world, "the Guatemalan economy weakened considerably following the fall of Arbenz," the labor movement was "virtually destroyed" and "rural groups are having even more difficulty in obtaining favorable government action" with the destruction of peasant organizations and the denial of "the right to organize," democratic forms were being dismantled by violence and most of the population was disenfranchised, land reform was reversed, and the social gains of the democratic decade were abolished.

In such ways, the U.S. created a "showcase for democ-

racy," with the chorus at home basking in the pride and self-adulation that is a standard concomitant of such exercises. The record is being replayed today, with even more enthusiasm, in glorification of the ghastly decade of U.S.-run atrocities that succeeded in demolishing a good part, though not all, of the democratic awakening of the 1970s, when the Central American rabble once again made the mistake of trying to take some control over their lives and fate.

Terror in Guatemala mounted again in the late 1960s, with active U.S. participation, leaving many thousands dead. The process resumed a decade later, soon reaching epic levels of barbarism as the U.S. campaign against democracy and social justice moved into high gear throughout the region. Over 440 villages were demolished, huge areas of the highlands were destroyed in a frenzy of possibly irreversible environmental devastation, and well over 100,000 civilians were killed or "disappeared," up to 150,000 according to the Church and others. All of this proceeded with the enthusiastic acclaim of the Reagan administration, who assured the public at the height of the horror that the most extreme murderers and torturers were "totally committed to democracy" and were receiving a "bum rap" from human rights organizations, the Church, and others who are soft on Communism. Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Enders, who has recently gained some notoriety after belated exposure of his role in covering up huge massacres in El Salvador, wrote that

No one deny would the possibility (sic) of units of the military, in contravention of stated policy, having been involved in violations of human rights. What is important is that since March 23 [1982] the Government of Guatemala has committed itself to a new course and has made significant progress.

Enders's letter was distributed through the Guatemalan press, where, as Americas Watch pointed out in a bitterly critical reaction, it served to put at even greater risk the brave human rights investigators who sought to survive the "significant progress" of the State Department's favorite killers. The press went along without few mrrmurs.

There is no space to document adequately the "new course" that so entranced Mr. Enders. It was reviewed in October 1982 by Amnesty International, which reported that in widespread massacres, the new progressive regime had "destroyed entire villages, tortured and mutilated local people and carried out mass executions,"

For example, in one village troops "forced all the inhabitants into the courthouse, raped the women and beheaded the men, and then battered the children to death against rocks in a nearby river." Survivors of the Finca San Francisco massacre in July described how 300 people were killed, the women raped and shot or burned to death in houses put to the torch, the old people hacked to pieces with machetes, the children disemboweled. The last child, two or three years old, kept screaming after he was disemboweled so "the soldier grabbed a thick hard stick and bashed his head," then "smashed him against a tree trunk" so hard that his head "split open.," The London Economist reported the "sadistic butchery" of Enders's "new course," meanwhile recommending that El Salvador "could copy" these methods with profit and that "liberal Americans" should at most call for "an easing of the political persecution of the centre-which played into the hands of the extreme left in the first place." The rest can perish in silence.

In a letter of July 27, Father Ronald Hennesy reviewed "a few of the happenings of just this month in just this parish," four months into the "new course" and just as Washington granted \$11 million to the military regime to reward its "progress." He described how soldiers came to a village, took ten men, "tied their hands behind their back, cut their throats,

and tossed them off the cliff." In another, "four tortured bodies were dumped on the road." In another, the army forced villagers to beat seven people to death with clubs, killing a 13-year-old boy for good measure. In another, "all of the men, with hands tied behind their backs, were escorted by the soldiers to one house, shot, stabbed, piled one on top of the other, and covered with burnable items of the very house, which were sprinkled with gasoline and set on fire. The women were treated the same as the men, stacked for burning. The other children were tied, one to another, and pulled alive into the flames of a third house by the soldiers."

And on, and on.

While Enders praised the "new course," his boss George Shultz looked on, displaying the steely integrity for which he is much admired. Or perhaps he was preparing his notes for his forthcoming trip to Panama to hail the election of his former student Nicolas Ardito Barletta as "initiating the process of democracy" after the election had been stolen by his (then-friend) Manuel Noriega. with fraud and violence, saving the country from the actual victor, an 'ultra-nationalist' Washington disliked.

One of the grandest of the Guatemalan killers, General Hector Gramajo, was granted a fellowship to Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. There he gave an interview to the Harvard International Review in which he rejected criticisms of his role, which failed to recognize his contributions. He took personal credit for the "70% 30% civil affairs program, used by the Guatemalan government during the 1980s to control people or organizations who disagreed with the government," outlining the doctrinal innovations he had introduced: "We have created a more humanitarian, less costly strategy, to be more compatible with the democratic system. We instituted civil affairs [in 1982] which provides development for 70% of the population, while we kill 30%. Before, the strategy was to kill 100%." This is a "more sophisticated means" than the previous crude assumption that you must "kill everyone to complete the job" of controlling dissent, he pointed out. Perhaps this new announced strategy is the "significant progress" that so impressed the State Department.

A "senior commander in the early 1980s, when the Guatemalan military was blamed for the deaths of tens of thousands of people, largely civilians," Gramajo "is seen as a moderate by the U.S. Embassy," Kenneth Freed reported in the Los Angeles Times in 1990, quoting a Western diplomat, and assuring us of Washington's "repugnance" at the actions of the security forces it supported and applauded. As a "moderate," Gramajo joins a distinguished company that includes Mussolini, Hitler, Suharto, and numerous other attractive folk who, it was thought, were serving U.S. interests. The Washington Post reports that many Guatemalan politicians expect Gramajo to win forthcoming elections, not unlikely if he is the State Department favorite, as widely rumored. Gramajo's image is also being prettified. He offered the Post a sanitized version of his interview on the 70%-30% program: "The effort of the government was to be 70% in development and 30% in the war effort. I was not referring to the people, just the effort." Before he had just expressed himself badly, before the Harvard grooming took effect. The goal of the massacres that peaked in the early 1980s was to prevent a recurrence of popular organization or any further thought of freedom or social reform. The Guatemalan military followed the model of the National Security States that had their roots in Kennedy administration policies: the recourse to state terror "to destroy permanently a perceived threat to the existing structure of

socioeconomic privilege by eliminating the political participation of the numerical majority..." The toll since the U.S. regained control is commonly estimated at about 200,000 unarmed civilians killed or "disappeared." In the highlands, the record is unspeakable. In an amazing triumph of the human spirit, popular forces and leaders continue their struggle against U.S.-backed neo-Nazism.

Throughout, the task has been to put to rest, for once and for all, the heresies that had sprouted in Guatemala during the decade of democracy. They were reviewed by the National Intelligence Estimate of July 1955, already quoted, which found that "Most politically conscious Guatemalans believe that the US planned and underwrote the 1954 revolution," evidently not having read the State Department version as presented by the New York Times. More dangerous yet, "A keen sense of nationalism, at times verging on the irrational, colors Guatemalan politics... there is a strong tendency to attribute Guatemala's backwardness to foreign investors, especially those from the US. Even the most pro-US elements in the area are not immune to this type of extreme nationalism." No less serious was "the heritage of the revolution of 1944." "Many Guatemalans are passionately attached to the democratic-nationalist ideals of the 1944 revolution," particularly, to "the social and economic programs initiated by the Arevalo and Arbenz regimes." During these years of excessive democracy, "the social and economic needs of labor and the peasantry were articulated and exploited by the small Communist leadership" who "were able to promote measures which appeared to meet some of the aspirations of these groups," including "considerable progress in the organization of urban and rural unions" and "inducing the government to expropriate large tracts of land for distribution among the landless" in a successful agrarian reform.

Unfortunately, intelligence concludes, "there are probably not over 200,000 Guatemalans who are more than marginally politically conscious." Hence the prevalence of the strange delusions held by "many Guatemalans," including workers and peasants and even "most pro-US elements." And of the tiny minority who can comprehend the official U.S. version of reality and therefore qualify as at least "marginally politically conscious," "few understand the processes and responsibilities of democracy," so that "responsible democratic government is therefore difficult to achieve." The peons may still sink back to their puerile preference for democratically elected governments that promote measures to meet the aspirations of the overwhelming failed to get to the roots of the problem. A CIA analysis of 1965 deplored the "low level of intellectualism" in the country that makes the task of reeducation so difficult. As evidence, the Agency noted that "liberal groups ... are overresponsive to 'Yankee imperialist' themes," perhaps because of "the longterm political and economic influence of US fruit companies in the country as well as by the US role in the Castillo Armas liberation"-the "liberation" by the CIA-run coup that overthrew the popular democratic government and reinstated the murderous rule of the military and oligarchy. The rot is persistent, and the leader of the Free World must dedicate itself to removing it forever.

As for the "showcase of democracy," an election was scheduled for 1963, but it was blocked by a military coup tolerated or backed by the Kennedy administration to prevent the participation of Juan Jos& Arevalo, still suspect as soft on Communism though he had by then become an ardent admirer of the United States, now that it was led by "new men-men who studied at Harvard." An election did take place in 1966. Its effect was to extend military control over the country, setting off a huge wave of terror with direct U.S.

participation. A 1985 election was proclaimed by the U.S. embassy to be the "final step in the reestablishment of democracy in Guatemala." The November 1990 elections ended in a draw between two right-wing candidates advocating the neo-liberal programs that the U.S. insists upon for the Third World. They managed to stir up 30% of the electorate (counting valid votes). In the runoff election won by Jorge Serrano, abstention was even higher.

After Serrano's military-backed "self-coup" of May 1993 elicited fears of an aid cut-off, the Guatemalan military, who generally run the show behind a very thin screen, "opted to stay in the barracks" as popular forces impelled the Congress to elect Ramiro de Leon Carpio, Guatemala's human rights ombudsman, to complete Serrano's term. "Overarching credit for the peaceful transition," according to former Times Latin America correspondent Henry Raymont who was in Guatemala with the OAS mission, "goes to the civic movement" inspired by de Leon Carpio's "bold denunciations of human rights violations by the Serrano government," the "crucial ruling" by Supreme Electoral Tribunal president Arturo Herbruger declaring Serrano's acts unconstitutional, and "the daily protest marches led by labor leaders and Rigoberta Menchu." The Clinton administration "is taking excessive credit," he concludes, ignoring the courageous actions that led to "the triumph of the will of the people." "Guatemala was saved from this inept tyrant's apprentice by the courageous and decisive action of a handful of Guatemalans who, in the name of my country, I wish to thank," wrote the editor of the newsweekly *Cronica* that had been banned by Serrano.

The army may have remained in the barracks, but "whether it will remain there remains to be seen," Raymont observes. De Leon Carpio's first act was to name as his new Defense Minister General Roberto Perussina, "a senior officer viewed by some diplomats and Guatemalan analysts as a leader of the harder-line faction within the army." U.S. aid, temporarily withheld, resumed. Perussina was replaced a few weeks later by an officer considered more moderate, though again with a dubious human rights record, a characteristic that few high officers lack. There are hopeful signs, but they will not materialize by themselves.

The horrifying terror, which continues to the present, is only one aspect, one might even say a minor aspect, of the violence and abuse that we have imposed and maintained by force in this rich and potentially flourishing country. When we deplore the crimes of official enemies, such as the Khmer Rouge, we rightly count the numbers who died as a result of their brutal policies, not merely those killed outright, a minority of the victims. Similar calculations in Guatemala would yield an awesome figure. Merely to give a brief indication, Guatemala now boasts a higher level of child malnutrition than Haiti, according to UNICEF. The Health Ministry reports that 40% of students suffer from chronic malnutrition, while 2.5 million children in this country of 9 million suffer abuse that leads them to abandon school and become involved in crime, or live in the streets where they are subject to torture by security forces, reported to be "soaring." A quarter of a million have been orphaned by political violence. 87% of the population live below the poverty line (up from 79% in 1980), 72% cannot afford a minimum diet (52% in 1980), 6 million have no access to health service, 3.6 million lack drinking water, and concentration of land ownership continues to rise (2% now control 70% of the land). Purchasing power in 1989 was 22% of its 1972 level, dropping still further as the neoliberal measures of the 1980s were intensified. As terror improved the investment climate after the 1954 "liberation," U.S. advisers were able to impose the preferred "development model," with the right priorities. Export-oriented eco-

nomics programs led to rapid growth in production of "non-traditional" agricultural commodities and beef for export, destruction of forests and subsistence agriculture, sharp increase in hunger and general misery, the world championship for DDT in mothers' milk (185 times World Health Organization limits), and gratifying balance sheets for U.S. agribusiness and local affiliates. Dr. Luis Genaro Morales, president of the Guatemalan Pediatric Association, adds that child trafficking "is becoming one of the principal nontraditional export products," generating \$20 million of business a year. The International Human Rights Federation, after an inquiry in Guatemala, gave a more conservative estimate, reporting that about 300 children are kidnapped every year, taken to secret nurseries, then sold for adoption at about \$10,000 per child. We may put aside here the macabre reports, common throughout much of Latin America from sources that are not easy to discount, about kidnapping of children for organ transplants.

Current economic plans, under the guidance of U.S. advisers, are intensifying this range of effects. We have much to be proud of in the "showplace of democracy" that we graciously instituted and maintained.

The reports of refugees and of the human rights activists who have somehow continued their work under atrocious conditions have provided a gruesome record of what has been happening in these terrible years. The shameful picture is extended in the personal testimonies of the *companeros* and *companeras* who, with awesome heroism that even their unassuming simplicity cannot disguise, turned to resistance against unending barbarism. As the picture comes to light, a sane person cannot fail to feel outrage and anger, despair that the human soul can harbor such depths of depravity. But other questions might come to the fore. Who created "the situation that gives rise to violence"? Who refused to listen to the screams of children being brutally murdered or dying from starvation and disease, because there are pleasanter things to do? Who paid taxes quietly and unthinkingly, helping to ensure that torture, massacre, and indescribable suffering continue, while doing nothing to end these crimes—or worse, justifying and abetting them? Who joined in the torrents of self-praise that pour forth in sickening abundance, keeping eyes carefully averted from what we have actually done with our huge resources and incomparable advantages? Who are the real barbarians?

-----Noam Chomsky 22 July 1993

Portions of Author's Note—**Jennifer Harbury** **Bridge of Courage**

"Who are the Guatemalan revolutionaries? What minds and hearts make up the organizations of the entity called the *Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca*, the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union (URNG)? What do they want? What do they think? How do they behave? Do people support them? Magazines, television, and newspapers in the United States reveal little about Guatemala and nothing about the *companeros* themselves. Not surprisingly, the various Latin American revolutions begin to blur together in the consciousness of the U.S. public. In the absence of concrete information, the image of a guerrilla emerges in foggy and stereotypical form, young and a bit macho, idealistic yet dogmatic, jaunty in a beret and dangerously armed....."

This book is an anthology, a collection of oral histories. Throughout the years, there have been many difficult times, but also quiet times, opportunities to talk, swap stories, ask about each other's lives and dreams. I have written down those

stories, just as they were told to me. For the sake of accuracy, I have included only accounts that were given to me first hand, and by people I had come to know personally. I have also included excerpts from the journal I kept during my time in Guatemala.

Anita

Come on now, don't be shy. I see you are looking at the scars on my face. A big bullet blew off half my jaw about five years ago during an army ambush. As a doctor, I can tell you it was hell to repair all the damage—more than a dozen full-anesthesia surgeries in a Costa Rican hospital. I had family there, so I was lucky. Even though they didn't approve, they provided me with papers and a cover story for the injury. It took years, though. All I really remember from that period is rolling in and out of surgery, and lifting weights and working out in between operations to keep up my strength.

Here, sit down and drink some of this coffee and I'll tell you the whole story. This is good Guatemalan coffee, hard to get here, so I hope you enjoy it. Try this fruit too, from our garden. There's nothing wrong with my jaw now, so we can talk all afternoon, if you like. My childhood was a little rough and tumble. I never really knew my father. He had abandoned my mother and all of us children, and only came to the house from time to time when he was drunk, to abuse her and take her hard earned money. She never complained much, because she assumed that men were just that way. And besides, she was strong enough to handle anything. She was a tough, beautiful peasant woman who could manage a twenty-hour work day and five small children without even slowing down. And she was smart, too. Even with the meager education she had, she started her own successful business and kept it going. Years later, it was she who saved my life, no questions asked, and got me out of the country to safety. And it was she, no questions asked, who reconnected me to the underground once I was strong enough to go back to war. I know that it is from her example that I developed my opinions on feminism and the role of women.

I joined the underground during my last year of medical school. I had just finished a rotation up in the jungle areas with the peasant cooperatives, and had learned a lot. What an eye opener that year was! It had been very difficult. My school supervisor hated women medical students and had sent me to the most remote regions in hopes that I would give up. Instead, though, I thrived, and came to love the villagers who took me in and cared for me. I loved their gentle ways, and their generosity, and I saw the unfairness and repression that they suffered. I never forgot it, even after I returned to the capital for my last year of study. And with my new awareness, I saw the things in the city that, perhaps, I hadn't wanted to see before.

I lived not far from a small union office, and on the way to the hospital each morning, I saw the fresh black ribbons on the union door, the new photographs, signaling yet another member dragged off to an ugly death in the middle of the night. And I saw the morgues. The tortures that had been inflicted on these people, the expressions on those dead faces, I will never forget. It is because of the morgues, I am positive, that so many of us medical students, and yes, even professors, joined up with the underground that year. Look, here is my graduation photo. See the two men handing me my diploma? They are both dead now; they were part of the city underground, but I didn't know it then. The two students next to me? They were with the guerrillas, too. I think they went to the mountains. None of us knew about each other, for security reasons. But I know now, and when I look at this photo, I feel doubly proud. Proud of the diploma and my completed studies, proud of all of us in the group, and proud of the courage represented in this image. It makes me happy to show it to you. I want these people remembered.

At first I worked in the city, with another medical student named Melissa. We had many small tasks: treating a wounded person

brought in from the mountains, hiding medicines and passing them on, working in the clandestine clinics. It was all very dangerous. To be caught with medicines outside of the hospital meant death by torture. To be found treating a wounded combatant meant an immediate bullet. We both understood this, but we gave each other so much support, so much love. We were more than sisters. I still weep when I think of Melissa.

I don't know how she was found out, but she was. Things had grown so terrible in the city. Every day, our people were captured and tortured. And under that kind of torture, if people do not die quickly, they will talk. They cannot help it. So perhaps someone spoke of her, described her, gave away her next meeting point. Who knows—it doesn't matter. I found her in the morgue with so many others. She was naked and battered, her face bluish from strangulation, small razor cuts and cigarette burns up and down her arms and legs. Her autopsy report showed vaginal slashes, as if her captors, once finished with her themselves, had raped her with a broken bottle. Her eyes were gone, the sockets filled with mud. Looking down at her, I felt all my physician's arts were useless. It is so strange—it was not her injuries that hurt me the most. She was the same as all the others, there on the metal slabs that day. I had grown used to it. The pain was just from the loss of her, the loss for all of us left living.

That was the day I left for the mountains. I knew they would be coming for me soon. But that wasn't the real reason I left. I knew I could die just as quickly in the mountains. I could have fled the country to safety, but I chose not to. I had made a decision—I had decided to fight. I had decided that when those animals came looking for me, to kill me in that way, by God they were going to find me with a gun in my hands.

Jorge

My first language is Canjobal. From up here in the mountains, I can say that with pride. Certainly my family raised me to speak it with pride. But the teachers in the schools, down in the cities, and the other, wealthier, Ladino students, for them it was a reason to punish me, to humiliate me. It was Spanish, or Castellano if you please, and if my cousin and I were caught murmuring to each other in our own tongue, we were either jeered or beaten. To them, we were never Mayan, only indios, no matter how we succeeded at our studies. Fortunately, we came from strong families, and they never let us forget who we really were.

Both Mariella and I had grown up in the same village, in the highlands. The land there is very green, very beautiful, and good for the growing of many things. But even so, we were all very poor. It takes cash to buy fertilizers and equipment. Cash to bring the crops to the market from a far-away highland village. Any profits we might make were lost to the middlemen in the cities. I remember hearing the elders talking, even when I was a small child, about the need to organize ourselves, to pool monies, to buy a village generator and a village truck to haul our own crops with. After all, we shared everything else. We worked community fields together, built our homes together, made community decisions all together. It was our way of doing things. To this day, I think of these ways as a model for our future, for a new society where we can all respect each other, where we can all care for each other, instead of struggling like beasts to enrich ourselves at the cost of another human's suffering.

Perhaps my father had the same dreams, because very early on, he sent Mariella and me away to a church-run

school in the city. We had just finished the fourth grade, both of us with very good notes, and the priest had gone to speak with my father about giving us a scholarship. Mariella's father had died of fever many years before, and her family was living with mine. My father made the decision for us both. We were to leave the village and study very hard, so that one day we could return and help our people to have a better life. We, of course, did not want to go at all. To leave our village was unthinkable. And it was a very unusual decision, really. Three or four years of school was more than either of my parents had, and it was a lot for most of our people. We all went to school when we could, but we had to work the fields to survive, so work always came first. To send both of us away would mean hard times for our family. They would have to carry their own work loads as well as ours, and my mother was already ill. But my father was determined. For our lives to get better, we must sacrifice, he explained. The family would sacrifice by working still harder, we were to sacrifice by studying very seriously, and learning things that would help our village. And so the community gave us a going away party, with good food and music from the marimba. My mother sewed us each one set of new clothes. And then we found ourselves on a rickety bus careening down the green mountainsides to the city. The trip took fourteen hours, and all the way we wept.

Our school years were good in many ways. The teachers were strict, but they taught us many things. We learned about city life, about telephones and trains and banks. We listened to what the people on the streets were saying, and learned politics and current events. We learned about the rest of our own country, our natural resources, our history. We read and read. But we were never really accepted. Even the friendliest of the ladinos saw us as clay--clay for assimilation into their own culture. So there was a constant, and silent, tug of war. I reacted by retreating into my studies. Mariella fought. She was in the girls' wing, but we met every evening to whisper confidences and remember our home. Our family came to see us when they could, and we would talk until the early hours. They would teach us what we would have learned if we were still in our village--medicinal herbs, wild plants, our ancestral history.

We did well at school, but even when we finished secondary school my father would not let us return home. He packed us off to the university in the capital to learn more. He was older now, and very tired, but still, he would not let us come home to take care of him. The neighbors were helping, he told us, because they knew we would be coming back soon and would help them with all our new learning. We were to go to the university, and so we did. Mariella studied to become a social worker and I studied agronomy. We worked during the days and studied and took our classes at night. Mariella became very beautiful, but apart from that, all those years in the city did not change us at all.

And then, suddenly, we were finished and my father and our neighbors were embracing us and welcoming us back, offering us special foods and presenting us with the woven clothing of our village. My mother had died the year before, her lungs destroyed by years of tuberculosis, no money, and no medicine. So the neighbors had woven the cloth in her place, to welcome us back to our village.

We went straight to work, especially Mariella. Always the stronger of the two of us, she plunged into her organizing work with the incredible energies she had stored up over the years. She set to work organizing a village co-op to buy better seeds and fertilizers. She got us money from a foreign foundation and bought the co-op a truck to carry the crops to market. The commercial truckers grew angry with her for that but she didn't care. Then she set to work to negotiate

for better prices from the business people in the cities and got other, nearby villages to work with her. No one would sell until everyone got a fair price. The co-op saved and saved until there was money to buy harvesting equipment we had to rent before. I worked with her night and day, and the villagers were very happy. But of course, the businessmen and the big companies were not happy with us at all. They were especially not happy with Mariella, or with the co-op. They said the co-op was a communist organization, and that Mariella and I were subversives.

Then the threats began. One night the truck was burned. Later, a villager was found decapitated on the road to the city. But Mariella wouldn't quit, wouldn't even slow down. To her, the time for change had come, and just as our village had sacrificed for us, she was going to fight for them. She reported the killing to the church in the city. She began to meet with Indian cooperatives from other areas and became involved in the movement for racial equality for our people. After all, she said, we are 60 percent of the population here, and we do all of the work. Once she came back from the city and told me what she had heard of the underground resistance movement. The guerrillas were getting stronger, she told me. They are fighting for us. Their soldiers are all our own people. We marveled at this for a very long time, and wished we could meet them, but had no idea how. In Guatemala, it is a very dangerous thing to try to find out about the guerrillas.

Then one day, Mariella came to me, thrilled. A young man had come to the village to find her. He said he had been sent by someone in the other coop she had visited the month before. He knew the right names, the right code words for safety and for trust. He told her he was a guerrilla, sent down from the mountains to talk to the people. He wanted to tell the villagers what the movement was about, what they were fighting for. Was there a popular organization there? Yes, she told him, the village cooperative. How many leaders in the co-op? About twenty, she answered. Would they be interested in listening to him? Yes, she was certain they would want to learn about this new movement. Good. Tomorrow at two, at the town hall? Yes, that would be fine.

I was afraid, but did not know why. We did not know this young man. Why had he come to us? Things with the army were becoming so difficult. They would kill us if they found out about this meeting. We did not know anyone in the guerrilla movement, so how could we tell if this man was truly a member or not? We had no way to judge him. Mariella listened carefully, and we talked late into the night. But in the end she decided to go. He knew the codes. It was only a meeting, after all, she reasoned. No one was doing anything but listening to what the man had to say. And we needed to know about this movement. She was convinced that the underground would become an important force in our country, and wanted to learn more about it. It was dangerous, but everything was dangerous in these days. We must have courage. And so she convinced me.

The next day I was in my small green house when I heard the screams and shouts begin. A young girl, bleeding from a blow to the mouth ran up the hill to me, sobbing. The army had come with the stranger. It was, after all, a trick. They were rounding up all of the co-op members and loading them into a truck. I must hide--they were looking for me. I ran into the tall corn plants and up a slope where I could see what was happening in the center of the village. The co-op building that we had all built together was burning. The army vehicle was there, the back opened up like a cattle truck. The soldiers were screaming obscenities and dragging the people inside. The other villagers were begging and pleading for their relatives. An old

woman hung onto her son and was clubbed to the ground. My uncle reached out for his daughter, and a soldier slashed his face with a bayonet. None of our people had guns, only their voices to plead for mercy, to beg for the lives of their family. I saw Mariella then, bending over the old man. The soldiers fell on her, dragging her to the truck. It took three of them to drag her, she fought so hard. She looked once towards where I was hiding. Could she have known I was there? Her beautiful face was covered with blood from a blow to her head. I started up to run to her, but the village girl next to me pulled me down and held my face against her shoulder, so I couldn't see anything else. Two other villagers who had hidden with us held my arms. When I looked up again the truck was gone, with nineteen of our people.

We went to the church. They tried to help us but could do nothing. I went to the army, desperate, but they denied that they had any of our villagers. Mariella must have run off with some sweetheart without telling me, they said. I tried at some government offices, but we were under a military government, and they told me the same thing. When I kept asking, they threatened me, and I knew they meant it. There was no place else to go, no human rights groups in Guatemala, no Red Cross, no nothing. Finally our village received word that a group of bodies had been found far away, on the coast, the sea birds picking at them. I started to go, then realized that if Mariella was there I didn't want to know it. In my mind at least, she was still alive.

Our village never -recovered. It was as if our communal heart had been cut out. We could have rebuilt the co-op, but the soldiers kept coming back and telling us it was subversive. I tried to keep working, but for what? We needed so much more than new strains of corn. I began remembering all the stories my father used to tell us when he visited in the city, about how our ancestors had fought against the conquistadors for the last five hundred years, how Guatemala is one of the few places where our people have survived, how we survived because we never stopped struggling against the invaders. And so I began to wait for the real guerrillas to reach our village. And when they finally did, I knew I could trust them. They were villagers like us, the same eyes, the same hair. They spoke our language. They wanted the same things we wanted. The same things Mariella had always wanted. And so when they packed up to leave, I asked them for a rifle and followed them out of the village.

I have been up here for more than ten years now. Up here, all languages are spoken, all cultures are respected. Mayan and ladino, we are together here, all dreaming of the same new world, where our children can live differently. So much has happened, I could talk for hours and hours. Will I ever come down? Only after the triumph. Only after the army is driven from our lands and we can start over again. So many of us were killed in the early days. Mariella, the compas, both Mayan and ladino, who died next to me in combat, the people in the capital who fought for us. They are all dead, but they knew what they were fighting for. My job is to carry on for them. They saw the light at the end of the tunnel so long before I did. It is for me, as one who loved them, to bring that light to our people.

Gabriel

Ah, God, the Karl Marx question! I knew it. You foreigners are all alike, you all ask the same questions. You think you can get a handle on us, understand us better, by finding out if we consider ourselves to be Marxists. But look, even if I could figure out how to answer that question, you're missing the whole point of what is going on in our country.

Here, have some of this great mango here, or a little avocado, while I try to explain. One thing for sure, this part of the world produces great fruit, don't you think? Our lands are so rich and yet our people are so poor.

Personally, I feel that Karl Marx was a very great man, and a very important thinker for his day and age. I'm one of the lucky ones in Guatemala, I was able to attend the university and get hold of some

his materials to read. I think the man had a very interesting and original mind. Many of his concepts overlap with some of the traditional ways of life in my own country. Have you spent much time with the Mayan peoples? Have you been to their villages? So you saw how they are, then, how they stick together and take care of each other, how the whole community shares so many things. They have a very strong communal streak. They always have. So do the Amish peoples in your country, I hear. So did the early Christians. Were they Marxist? I don't think, somehow, that old Karl has a monopoly on these ideas. The same goes for the notion that people should be able to work collectively and share in the benefits. Don't you people have food co-ops in your country? Labor unions? Do we have to give up our cultural heritage to make everyone happy with us?

Look, Marx had a lot of ideas. We will probably disagree on some and coincide on others, especially if they are concepts that would fit well into our own, modern-day conditions. But coinciding on certain issues doesn't make us zombie-like followers of Mr. Marx. We have minds of our own, a country of our own, problems and issues of our own. To label us so superficially is to rob us of our individuality, of our own thinking. In many ways, I see this as a problem of cultural racism. Up in the mountains, our platoons are 90 percent Mayan. Do you think those people are all up there because of some nineteenth-century European?

More importantly, your question focuses all the attention on only one aspect of our struggle. Let me tell you why I am in the revolution here. I am not risking my life to make das Kapital into the new Bible. I am fighting because in my country child malnutrition is close to 85 percent. Ten percent of all children will be dead before the age of five, and that is only the number actually reported to government agencies. Close to 70 percent of our people are functionally illiterate. There is almost no industry in our country-you need land to survive. Less than 3 percent of our landowners own over 65 percent of our lands. In the last fifteen years or so, there have been over 150,000 political murders and disappearances. That is why I am up here, fighting, even now that I am so old my knees want to give out.

Don't talk to me about Gandhi; he wouldn't have survived a week here. Do you know the history of our peaceful reform efforts here? I once worked in a union, but after a march one day my friends were found dead in a gutter rolled up in their banners. Do you know how many unionists have died? Look at the Indian rights movement. The CUC leaders were burned alive in the Spanish Embassy. The rural health promoter campaign? Those people are dead. The church efforts to form co-ops and selfhelp networks for the poor? Well, those people were all accused of communism too, don't you see? So many priests have been killed here-I don't want to think of how many of their catechists. There was a peaceful movement for progress here, once. They were crushed. We were crushed. For Gandhi's methods to work, there must be a government capable of shame. We lack that here.

After it is all over I would like to have a family. I would like to work a small garden and maybe start some hydro-electric energy systems in our rural areas. There's no electricity but there's plenty of running water. My compa wants to do rural health organizing. All of us have ideas, plans, on how to make our country a place where everyone can live, not just the rich. We would like to struggle into the

twentieth century without having to pay with our lives. As I said, I feel that Karl Marx was a fine man, but he died in industrialized Germany over a hundred years ago without ever setting foot in Guatemala. What did he know of our history, our conditions, our people? What did he know of our indigenous population? Please, tell all of your friends, tell them to just think of us as what we are, as Guatemalan citizens and revolutionaries. What is it about foreigners that they can only comprehend us by how close we come to fitting some European precedent? Why are we, as just ourselves, so invisible? Camilo Talks About Food

Food is very dear to our hearts. This you can understand, I am sure. Most of us grew up hungry, and our diet here, although sufficient, is not luxurious. There is coffee, rice, corn, beans, atole, and wild roots and herbs. We do not go hungry, not any more. But we all love to think about meats and breads and chocolates and cigarettes. Me. I like to think of a spicy sausage I ate at a carnival many years ago. So much flavor, I can taste it still. There was a thick, rolled-up pancake, too, with a sweet sauce. That was the night before I left for the mountains so long ago. I had spent the evening walking all over my small town, taking one last look. It is not so much the town I miss now, for my true friends and family are here with me. But the food, ah, that is another story. We are all the same about these things. Did you know that when we fall in love, we exchange spoons with our sweethearts as a sign of our affection?

It is the people from your part of the world, from North America, that I just cannot understand, not when it comes to food, anyway. Don't you like good flavors, well-prepared meals? You can have anything to eat that you want, and yet your foods, at least the ones I have tried, are so terrible. Please don't be offended, my friend. It is just that I don't understand, and here you are sitting right next to me to tell me all about it.

I have never been to your country, of course, so I am hardly an expert on this subject, But I will tell you about my one experience with American food that has left me wondering all these years. This happened close to this very volcano, as a matter of fact. There was a large plantation, owned by a very wealthy family, a very right-wing family, as well, I might add. They were very firmly on the side of the military, even during the times of the massacres, which I find hard to understand. It was not their beliefs, however, which drew our attention to them. It was their actions. They were allowing their lands to be used as a military base, and turning our people in to the authorities to be picked up and tortured. This, of course, we could not allow. We contacted them several times about these activities, warning them that they should limit their conduct to civilian affairs if they wished to be treated as civilians. They would be treated as a military target if they behaved as such. Of course, they did not take us seriously at all. Few people did back then. So after some time passed without any change on their part, we decided that we would have to take action.

We watched the place for a long time, waiting until most of the soldiers were away on a special excursion. Then we came down very late at night for a surprise raid. The few soldiers who had stayed behind simply ran off after the first few minutes of battle. I don't think their morale was very high, and there were no officers present to order them to hold their ground. So after only a brief skirmish, we were able to stroll right onto the property unimpeded. It was harvest time, and the sheds were brimming with cotton, which we quietly set afire. In this way the workers would not suffer hunger, only the owner would lose his profits.

The bright flames billowed high into the air, but no one from the big house came out to speak with us. So we walked up to the front door and called for someone to come outside and talk. We wanted to talk to them, tell them why we had burned their cotton, and tell them what changes we expected from them.

But the family had run off with the soldiers, fearing that we had come to kill them. The house stood empty but for an elderly Mayan servant, who opened the door for us. She listened quietly as we explained why we had come, and why we had taken action against the plantation. She nodded as we spoke, and suddenly, our evening's work was completed. "Mission accomplished," as they say in your movies, right? We had expected a much more difficult night. So, after talking for a few minutes, we decided that we might as well go into the kitchen and make ourselves a meal. We were all pretty hungry and there was bound to be plenty of food on a big plantation like that. Good food, too, we assumed. After all, this was a kitchen of the rich.

In the pantry we found all kinds of fancy, shining cans and jars of food, many with labels in languages we couldn't understand. We understood the pictures, though, and just for fun, we decided to try the imported stuff first, since it would be new and different. That was where the fun ended. We tried some of your breakfast cereals-I think it was Cheerios-then had some cold meat from a can. These were a big disappointment, so we tried some canned string beans and carrots, and these were even worse. Finally, we went on to powdered milk and instant potatoes and instant frijoles from little paper sacks. I will never forget the powdered frijoles. These were truly dreadful, my friend. How can anyone ruin plain beans? And the orange powder that was supposed to turn into orange juice? What on earth was that? After a little while, we became very full, but very frustrated, and decided to go on home. In the future, we would stick to the good food the villagers passed to us.

We talked about this food for a long time. Yankee food, as we had seen it, became almost legendary for a while. We just couldn't understand it. Why would anyone want fast food that was so fast you couldn't tell the beans from the potatoes without looking at the labels? Why would anyone want something as nice as food to be fast? Me, I like to sit over my meals for as long as possible, and enjoy every bite. We tried to imagine how people in your country must live, and for a long time we joked that the gringos were so good at taking all the fun out of life that they had probably even learned how to have babies, sex free, out of tin cans....and instant potatoes and instant frijoles from little paper sacks. I will never forget the powdered frijoles. These were truly dreadful, my friend. How can anyone ruin plain beans? And the orange powder that was supposed to turn into orange juice? What on earth was that? After a little while, we became very full, but very frustrated, and decided to go on home. In the future, we would stick to the good food the villagers passed to us.

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WHY AND HOW

You ask me why and how these things can happen. The why of it, only God can answer, my child. I wish I knew myself, so that I could give more comfort to those who come to me. But I can only join them in prayer, for I have no explanations. The how of it all, I can tell you in part, for part of it I have seen for myself. You remember the young man I spoke to you about before? I had thought to try and

help him leave the country. But there is no need now. He has gone quite insane, and is in danger no longer. He lives there in the church with us, and we care for him as best we can. You see, he was once a soldier. No, no, you must not look at me with such surprise. The Church will always shelter those who seek to repent, and this young man is not at fault. Let me tell you his story and see if you don't agree with me, and even feel sorry for him. Life has treated him cruelly enough.

This soldier, or rather, this deserter, is quite young. He was even younger when he enlisted, although enlisted is a euphemism. He grew up in a remote Mayan village and could neither read nor write, nor even speak much Spanish, when the army came to town. There was no formal registration of anyone. The military truck simply pulled up on the football field, and the soldiers took all the young men away, including him. He had just turned fifteen years of age a short while earlier, but no one asked about that. There was not even time to say farewell to his family. When the truck stopped, hewas at the army base.

Basic training was very difficult for him. He and his friends were jeered at and beaten until they learned to communicate in Spanish. The Mayan languages were not allowed. The work load was heavy, although this did not disturb him as much as the constant humiliations and cruelty. He had grown up with a heavy work load, but also with pride in his people and his heritage. At the base, this was taken away, day by day. He also hated the political training, to hear the disrespect given his people, to hear that in the mountains, the guerrillas were all communists and Cubans and Soviets. He had seen the companeros near his village before, and knew they were of his own people and no other. The soldiers told him that the guerrillas were committing atrocities, yet he knew who had killed his older brother. He heard these things and had his own ideas, but kept them to himself. He learned to survive by accepting, or by seeming to accept. And he trusted no one. And so his training period passed without disaster. Disaster occurred later, out in the field. Combat had not frightened the young man, although he found it meaningless and sad. But it was after the combat that his commanding officer, angered by the results of the battle, decided to descend on a nearby village. After going house to house for a short time, he returned, dragging a terrified young man with him. Together, they all marched out of the town, and higher up into the mountains, to a place far away from any other people. There, the poor prisoner was given a terrible beating, the officer screaming to him that he was a communist, and must reveal the names of his comrades. To our young man, it was clear that the boy knew nothing, that indeed, he could barely understand the Spanish in which he was being addressed. It was tempting to intercede, to speak up, at least to translate the questions being delivered with such heavy blows. But basic training had taught him to keep silent, to stand back.

When the youth fainted from the beating without answering the questions, the officer seated him in front of a tree, pulling his legs out straight before him, binding his arms around the trunk so tightly that the ropes dug into the flesh. Then he ordered the boy's boots removed, and a fire built. The soldiers were ordered to seize a flaming branch each and to form a line. One by one, they were to take turns burning the boy's feet until he identified his comrades. My young friend was halfway down the line, and sickened as the air filled with the smell of burnt flesh, and the other boy's screams. He said, when he arrived here, that it was like listening to his own screams. When he came to the head of the line he told his officer that he could not burn the other one's feet. He was told to sit down with the prisoner and take off his own boots. He hesitated for a moment, looking at the prisoner, and weighing the burning stick in his hand. Then he burned the boy's raw feet, and listened to his scream-their mutual scream.

After that he simply waited for his chance. It took awhile, but during the next battle he was able to fake his own death on the field, and rejoice as the other soldiers retreated without stopping

to recover his body. Then he waited for darkness and tore off his uniform, wandering to a nearby village to beg for help. Help he received, for the others, looking at him, thought of their own children taken away to be soldiers. And finally he arrived here, begging for sanctuary.

I have sheltered and cared for him as well as I can, but with time, he came to lose his mind completely. Now he does not know who he is or where he comes from. He screams out at night, but during the day can only stare out of the windows, muttering. He has found a safe place at last, out there where he is now.

They say that killing comes easier after the first time. That is how the army operates here. The first time is forced, then perhaps, too, the second or third. After that there is no resistance, no shock, and the men simply do as they are told. They no longer feel. Our young man escaped this fate. He lost everything but his conscience. For this I shall always respect him.

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CHAPTER SIX

CARRYING THE BIG STICK:

SWAT TEAMS AND PARAMILITARY POLICING

'If you're twenty-one, male, living in one of these neighborhoods, been in Fresno for ten years and you're not in our computer - then there's definitely something wrong.' Tactical officer, Fresno, California

'Yes, you won the war. We're waging the peace - it's much more volatile.' National Security Agency officer, in Enemy of the State

For a sneak preview of a future American police state, travel south from the comfortable illusions of the San Francisco Bay Area on Interstate 99 into the dirty air of California's Central Valley, to Fresno, a sprawling, poorly planned city of 400,000. Pass the forest of pole-perched McDonald's, Best Western, and Motel 6 signs and turn off on one of the city's southern exits into the sprawling ghetto of the southwest side. There, on the pocked streets, among the stucco bungalows and dying railyards, you'll find massive paramilitary police operations underway on almost any night of the week ...

It's a cold October evening, a helicopter clatters overhead, sweeping its lights across the shabby trees and flat homes. Nearby in the shadows, three squads of ten police officers in combat boots, black fatigues, and body armor lock and load their Heckler and Koch (H&K) MP-54 submachine guns (the same weapons used by the elite Navy SEALs) and fan out through the ghetto. Meet Fresno's Violent Crime Suppression Unit (VCSU), local law enforcement's "special forces" and America's most aggressive SWAT team. Since 1994 these soldier-cops have been conducting the criminal justice equivalent of search and destroy missions in Fresno's "gang-ridden" badlands, "It's a war," explains a police spokesperson.

Paramilitary policing - that is, enforcement using the equipment, training, rhetoric, and group tactics of war - is on the rise nationwide. Fresno's VCSU is only the most extreme example of America's more than 30,000 paramilitary Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams. First developed by a young LAPD commander named Daryl Gates in 1966 (see chapter one), SWAT teams also known as "tactical" or para-

military policing units - were conceived as an urban counterinsurgency bulwark. As one early SWAT officer explained: "Those people out there - the radicals, the revolutionaries, and the cop haters - are damned good at using shotguns, bombs or setting ambushes, so we've got to be better at what we do." Tactical units still treat policing as war, and that is what makes them fundamentally dangerous. If police are soldiers instead of civil servants, and their task is destruction and conquest, then it follows that the civilian community will be the enemy.

Even the etymology of L.A.'s initial tactical unit reveals a bellicose world-view. Gates started with the acronym SWAT - which has both a violent and dehumanizing ring to it -- and then filled it in with the name "Special Weapons Attack Team." His superiors saw this candid and robust name as a bit too provocative, so they decided to change it to the more technical sounding "Special Weapons and Tactics." As the crisis of the sixties and early seventies rolled on, most other large metropolitan police departments established their own tactical units with military weaponry, uniforms, and training. Some called themselves SWAT teams, others preferred to be Special Response Team, Emergency Response Team, or Tactical Operations Team.

This first-wave tactical buildup in big cities was followed, during the law-and-order bonanza of the mid and late eighties, by a massive second wave in which new SWAT teams proliferated to thousands of small and medium-sized towns. Fueled by the enthusiasm of what sociologist and SWAT scholar Peter Kraska calls "culturally intoxicated young officers" and drug-war pork spending, tactical units have metastasized from urban emergency response specialists into a standard part of everyday policing. Instead of answering four or five calls a year dealing with hostage takings or barricaded suspects, SWAT teams now conduct routine drug raids, serve "administrative" search warrants, and even go after run-of-the-mill parole and probation violators. Overall activity by paramilitary police units - as measured by the total number of "call-outs" - quadrupled between 1980 and 1995. But so far only Fresno uses its SWAT team and its armored vehicles, submachine guns, automatic rifles, attack dogs, and helicopters for routine patrol work, seven days a week.

PAYBACK WITH A TWIST: THE BIRTH OF THE VCSU

Fresno's new super-cops first hit the streets in 1994. Gang violence was wreaking havoc on the Latino and African American south side, where poverty and unemployment are concentrated. A slump in construction, continued mechanization of farming and food processing, along with the departure of agro-processing plants from the surrounding valley, added to the south side's stagnation. In the late 1980s these social conditions were aggravated by a cocaine glut and the city's irrational "growth-at-all-costs" planning policy that gave tax subsidies and abatements for paving over farmland, while schools and social services deteriorated in the name of fiscal rectitude. Added to all this was the recession of the early 1990s, which hit California late but with considerable force. On the south side, unemployment, nihilism, guns, rage, and the relatively late arrival of crack cocaine coalesced into a lethal cocktail of gang-propelled auto-extinction. In the mostly African American southwest parts of town, sets of Crips and Bloods fought each other and feuded among themselves. In the barrios to the southeast, the fratricidal wars involved norteno and sureno sets from California's prison-based super-gangs La Nuestra Familia, the Bull Dogs, and the Mexican Mafia.

By 1994 the violent streets were taking an increasing

number of noncombatants, including three children wounded by gunfire in as many months. The second half of the year was particularly bloody: police recorded fifty-five incidents of gunfire resulting in sixty-one casualties, thirteen of them fatal. Fresno's murder rate was already considerably higher than the state average.' But what really worried police was a new belligerence towards officers in the field, especially in the African American southwest. That April, an alleged gang member opened fire on cops during a routine traffic stop, then escaped into the night. In May, police units came under fire three different times; often their attackers shot from the cover of the Central Valley's extremely (tense winter and spring fog. One assault turned into a full-fledged fire-fight requiring back-up from the heavily armed SWAT team. It was the law enforcement equivalent of calling in a napalm strike on a tree-line. However, the incident that really spooked the PD was the ambush of officer Myrna Loran, who fled in her shot-up cruiser without returning fire or identifying her assailants.' To top it all off, an eight-year-old boy named Gary Ramirez took a stray bullet from a drive-by while chasing a puppy.

It would have made poor fiction, but the world of the Fresno PD is already stuck in hyperbolic overdrive and this was just the excuse the department needed: the symbol of innocence cut down by crossfire. Under the cover of this very real crisis of violence, Chief Ed Winchester announced a total war on gangs. With full support from the NAACP and the mainstream leadership of the Black community, Winchester ordered in "the cavalry" - his all-white SWAT team.

Dressed in gray jungle camouflage, military helmets, bulletproof vests, ski masks, goggles, and combat boots, and armed with AR-15s, MP-5s, attack dogs, "flash-bang" stun grenades, smoke bombs, tear gas, pepper spray, metal clubs, and less-than-lethal "blunt trauma ordinances," the SWAT team patrolled the southwest every day until order was restored. Its immediate task was to round up a list of some 200 suspected repeat offenders and veteran gangbangers. The enemy was to be tracked down, busted, and put away for as long as possible. The operation involved raiding homes, stopping cars, interrogating "suspicious persons," and storming an archipelago of "hot spot" corners,

Bringing up the rear was the fawning Fresno Bee, dishing out "bang-bang" copy: "[A] special SWAT team armed with machine guns and dogs, slipped into the city's south side Friday night with orders to take dangerous neighborhoods back from drug dealers and gang members." The city councilwoman from the besieged area called the police occupation "long overdue," while the DA asserted that the only difference between the war in Sarajevo and gangbanging in Fresno was the lack of rocket launchers in the latter."

Chief Winchester, enjoying the support and attention generated by his scorched-earth campaign, soon institutionalized the emergency response, and the thirty-member SWAT team became the Violent Crime Suppression Unit. In the name of crisis management the VCSU was free to continue using aggressive and unorthodox tactics that combined old-time thuggery with pernicious high tech. At times that meant cruising in a fleet of cars; at others it meant quietly deploying troops on foot to surround targets and sweep through patches of ghetto.

The street corner raids usually began with officers tossing "flash-bang grenades" (designed to stun and disorient suspects), then swooping in with barking dogs and guns drawn as they belted orders to get "the fuck down." Civilian-owned pit bulls, rottweilers and dobermans were shot on sight, while everyone in the targeted area was forced to the ground at gunpoint. As one team of ten VCSU officers established an armed perimeter, another team would train guns on prostrate "bad guys," while a third team would take photos, conduct "field interviews," run warrant checks, note tattoos, scars, clothing, "distinguishing char-

acteristics," and addresses, and add all new intelligence into local, state, and federal databases from the mobile computer terminals in each patrol car." Prisoners were carted out in a huge gray bus with SWAT emblazoned on the side that police likened to a rolling billboard.

Lately VCSU foot sweeps have been less common. The unit now prefers to roam the south side in regular patrol cars, "like a wolf pack" looking for "contact." This is due in large part to declining narco-commerce in Fresno's hot spots. Police and local ethnographers credit the relative calm to the mass internment of a whole generation of OGs (original gangsters) and mid-level players, who are now serving infinities of time in state prison on second- and third-strike charges, or in federal joints under the federal government's mandatory minimum sentencing guidelines. And as the relatively small minority of truly bad-ass semi-organized criminals are buried in human landfills, the VCSU's attention necessarily turns to less and less threatening behavior ...

It's almost midnight and the Central Valley is getting cold. A typical VCSU operation is underway. The target is a brightly lit gas station known for dealing and surrounded by barren waste ground just outside a rundown suburban ghetto called "the Dog Pound." As the first cruiser approaches, six young African American men on the corner start moving away: that's suspicious behavior, probable cause for a stop. Half the group slips into the dark, three are stopped. More cruisers pull up at high speed, cops pile out and surround the scene, a K-9 team unloads its barking Alsatian. The young men stiffen with fear, hands on their heads, facing the high beams of the police cruisers. Then it's down on the ground, legs out in front, crossed. The field interviews and frisking begin, scars are noted, IDs checked. From a patrol car terminal an officer runs warrant searches through the local Fresno PD database, the California Law Enforcement Teletype System (CLETS), and the FBI's all-encompassing NCIC (see chapter one for the history of the NCIC). "Bingo," says a crew-cut trooper. One of the youths is wanted; he is cuffed, placed under arrest, his pager and keys taken, and he is stuffed into the back of a squad car.

Next call. A unit has "contact" on the far end of the Dog Pound, and on foot an individual has fled the scene of a traffic stop, entering a nearby house; VCSU cars surge towards the action. While the occupants of the car are dealt with, the VCSU officers with AR-15s and H&K MP-54s surround the area and "holding the perimeter," some look at the house, others look out at the community. A line of five officers rushes the door. Technically they are not in hot pursuit and have no right to storm the building, but they took angry and their guns make it seem serious, so the elderly woman behind the black metal security gate quickly consents to a search. Five big, white cops move into the TV-lit room and grab a Black man named David. "What? Man, I didn't do anything!" he protests. His voice breaks and a tearful grimace momentarily clouds his face.

As police begin searching the small home, with consent from a trembling grandmother, it appears as if the past has suddenly lurched forward and collided with a high-tech future. More than anything else the VCSU robocops resemble the "patrollers" of the old South, the white, slave-catcher militias that spent their nights rousting Black people's shacks in search of contraband, weapons, and signs of escape,

"Are you on parole, probation? What? Hub? Let's go outside, David." The man is cuffed, searched, interrogated, forced to the ground, war-rants checked, flashlights continually shone in his face. No drugs found. But David lied, said he wasn't on parole and he is, "That's a violation of parole, David." Another Black man arrested and packed off to jail.

More "contacts" produce three ounces of crack - a huge bust. "He didn't signal, had an air freshener hanging from his rear-view mirror, so we pulled him over. He didn't have ID. So we searched." Boom -the white cops take another Black man to jail. Then the radios crackle: "Code three, at 621 South . . ." An officer needs help. The VCSU's fleet of Crown Victorias race towards the action.

A youth reportedly brandished a gun (not a crime unless there is a victim being threatened) and has sped off to his mother's house. The radios crackle again: "10 10, deploy units in the alley." The house is surrounded by the whole VCSU. From behind cars, officers train AR-15s, MP-5s, and the larger MP-54s on the front door and in the windows. Overhead a chopper beats the air, flooding the house with light and scanning the area with Forward Looking Infra-Red (FLIR). Gathering neighbors are kept at bay by detachments of regular Fresno PD officers. A CHP officer and several armed DA investigators arrive on the scene, guns drawn, and crouch dramatically behind vehicles. Because the person who reported the crime was not himself threatened by the gun, the VCSU has no probable cause to enter the house, and so the stand-off continues.

The FPD helicopter overhead runs short on fuel and sweeps back to gas up, as a bigger, louder CHP chopper takes its place pouring down an even brighter klieg light. (In a few months the choppers will have the capacity to send live video and FUR feed or freeze-frame maps from the air directly to the eleven-inch screens of the VCSU's brand-new in-car "mobile data terminals.")

From the door emerges a Latino teenager, hands in the air, tears streaming down his face. He walks slowly toward the bristling mob of white cops and into the blinding lights. Behind him comes a young woman and two small children, and after them an older woman in slippers and curlers. But the suspect, Juan, stays inside, phone off the hook. Desk jockeys from Probation - until a few years ago, unarmed bureaucrats - are now hovering at the elbow of the VCSU commanding officer. The Probation wannabes are eager for action, wearing jeans, bulletproof vests, and blue windbreakers and toting radios, cuffs, and Smith and Wesson .4-4 automatics. Juan is on their list so they have the right to storm his home without permission, probable cause, or a warrant. "We can go in. This is the primary [address]. You want to go in? We can do it. You wanna do it?" implore the probation squad. But the VCSU demurs. Like cops generally, VCSU officers are not inclined to follow other agencies." In fact, the VCSU despises other agencies, particularly their rival sibling the Fresno Sheriff's Department, and tonight that includes the weekend warriors from Probation. After another hour of waiting for Juan, scored to the incessant barking of the Alsatians, the pounding rotors of the CHP chopper, and occasional cajoling from the bull horn, the VCSU is getting bored. Too proud to cooperate with Probation and wanting to keep up a restrained and professional appearance in front of a researcher, they decide to call the siege off and move on to rousting the known hot spots.

Not all VCSU "contacts" end so peacefully. According to members of the unit they average at least one "officer-involved shooting" every three months. The last

confirmed kill they had was a former professional football star suffering a psychotic breakdown. Then a few months later they "shot some parolee with a gun," but the sergeant in charge of that operation says he never found out if the guy lived. Between July 1997 and July 1998, Fresno police shot seventeen People, eight of them fatally. "But to focus on confirmed kills is to miss the more routine, in many ways more important, forms of every(lay non-lethal terror that increasingly define police operations in poor communities. Since the advent of the VCSU the Fresno police have increased their misdemeanor arrests by 48.3 percent. "In other words, much of what they do is stop, search, harass, arrest, and brutalize petty offenders, parole violators, and bystanders. With no civilian complaint review board in Fresno, all brutality complaints are handled internally, and statistics on police misconduct, if they exist at all, are difficult to come by. The VCSU, however, says its searches, field interviews, and house raids are governed by the rules of probable cause. An increasing number of people in the have-not suburbs of Fresno's south side dispute this. Even the NAACP has changed its position. At first the group's criticism was limited to the fact that the VCSU had no African American officers. (As of late 1998 this was still true though not surprising, given that only 38 of Fresno's 655 police are African American.)" But the question of representation has slipped off the radar as the more immediate concern of paramilitary occupation in Black and Latino neighborhoods takes precedence.

"We had a whole group of people coming home from church and they were stopped at a gas station, where gangs hang out, and the police made them all get on the ground, lie in the dirt and oil. All of them - in their Sunday best," explains John Nelum, president of the Fresno NAACP, recalling a 1997 incident. Other mainstream African Americans express similar views, and their mood soured even further when the VCSU raided the home of a prominent Black judge. Even the pro-cop Fresno Bee has, on occasion, reported that police use violent threats and racist language, and conduct unlawful searches in Black, Latino, and increasingly in Hmong and Laotian neighborhoods.

HIGH-TECH TENTACLES

In many ways this local revolution in policing is the direct result of Clinton's campaign pledge to put 100,000 more cops on the streets. Since 1994, when that malignant promise took the form of the infamous crime bill, the FPD has increased its force from 400 to 655 (on its way to a goal of 800 by 2002), established a plethora of new special units, and introduced new technology into every aspect of policing. Thanks to \$28.4 million in federal grants, the FPD will soon have the nation's most advanced "field automation system," complete with electronic notepads which, using cellular phone technology, can communicate with the brand new computers in each patrol car. The computers in turn can communicate with, and search, local, state, and federal databases, thus giving officers in the field nearly instant access to mountains of intelligence ranging from outstanding warrants to DMV records.

Another gadget on the way is a portable electronic fingerprint reader. With this Dick-Tracy-dream-come-true, police can check prints in the field, then automatically and remotely search local, state, and federal databases for matching prints, outstanding warrants, mug shots, and other information. At the strategic level, Fresno will soon be using its own version of the Vietnam-inspired "electronic battlefield" for state-of-the-art, real-time crime mapping and deployment. With this technology, Chief Winchester hopes to begin holding Comtsat-style meetings. This hybrid between Pentagon

whiz-bang tech and New York QOL policing is also being adopted by other departments around the country.

While federal largesse paid for much of the start-up costs of Fresno's new fighting force, it is the local city government that will ultimately foot the bill. In Fresno, as throughout the country, federal policing grants may look like windfalls but their long-term effect is to create a new set of fiscal demands. For example, Fresno has hired scores of new cops whose positions are fully funded by Washington for the first two or three years, but when the money from D.C. runs dry the city pays up or explains to suburban voters why the police force is shrinking. Already this burden has forced Fresno to increase its law enforcement spending by about 5 percent annually while all other budget items are frozen or, as in the case of emergency medical care, cut. With a police officer's starting salary, including benefits, at around \$56,000 a year, the Police Department consumes up to 45 percent of Fresno's city budget. To appease the FPD's demand for cash the city has even channeled several million dollars from its Housing and Urban Development-sponsored community development block grants into its problem-oriented policing ("POP") teams." The future will no doubt bring more such cannibalization, GANGING UP ON YOUTH: THE PARAMILITARY PILE-ON

Back on the streets of Fresno, the wonders of a full-time SWAT team are rubbing off on other police agencies. By 1996 the massive funding opportunities provided by the 1994 crime bill's fat federal grant programs and the perceived success of the VCSU (as measured by declining crime rates) had caused a general proliferation of militarized anti-drug and anti-gang law enforcement units in Fresno. Prominent among the new forces is the Sheriff's Department's "Operation Goldstar." A typical Operation Goldstar sweep involves sixty to eighty sheriff's deputies, augmented by DA investigators, probation officers, and liaison agents from DEA, ATF, and FBI. Assembled at staging points and done up in the usual SWAT regalia of combat boots, helmets, jumpsuits, and body armor, and armed with H&K MP-5s, dogs, and battering rams, the Goldstar force sweeps problem corners in Fresno city and its increasingly urbanized unincorporated county environs. The outfit's mission is to search for drugs, guns, and -more often than not - simple "warrant fugitives," that is, people who have failed to show up in court. A typical weekend-long Goldstar sweep will bag between seventyfive and one hundred prisoners a night. 19

Another prominent new unit is the Multi-Agency Gang Enforcement Consortium (MAGEC). This sixty-strong task force, created to put "vise-like pressure on gangs," combines officers from the Fresno Police and Sheriff's Departments; probation and parole officers; agents from the FBI, DEA, ATF and INS; several armed investigators from the district attorney's office; and even a few agents from the California Department of Corrections' Special Services Unit (SSU), a super-secret police force that operates on and off prison grounds to keep tabs on parolees and other official enemies. "Upon christening the new superagency, then-governor Pete Wilson gushed that "California has never seen an army the likes of this."

Formed in mid 1997, this special force is now the dominant police program in Fresno's Latino, Black, and Laotian neighborhoods. justifying this massive combination and mobilization of repressive powers are the menacing - and absurdly precise - gang figures provided by the Fresno County Sheriff's Department: 236 separate gangs commanding the loyalty of some 7,855 combatants." Because part of MAGEC's mission is "nipping problems before they

escalate into violence" by using a large "intelligence unit to gather information and defuse potential gang activity," much of its work necessarily focuses on non-violent offenders." Like the VCSU, the regular PD, the Goldstar sweeps, and the new POP teams, MAGEC uses statutes that prohibit "loitering with intent to sell narcotics" as a justification to stop, interview, search, and run warrant checks on practically anyone occupying public space.

This sort of "intelligence gathering" does not merely "discover" delinquency, but rather by its very nature produces criminal identities, and thus justifies ever more layers of aggressive, invasive, and brutal policing. Based on probable cause stops and what police call "consensual contacts," the VCSU, Goldstar, and MAGEC conduct hundreds of field interviews every week, thousands every year. From this surveillance MAGEC alone adds between 300 and 400 new names to its gang dossiers and the state database called Cal Gang every quarter. More than mere inconvenience or humiliation, these interrogations, and the gang databases they feed, create very real liabilities. In a caricature of criminological "labeling theory" the Golden State's "gang enhancement" statute criminalizes membership in a gang. The bombastically titled California Street Terrorism Enforcement and Prevention Act of 1988 states that "any person who actively participates in any criminal street gang" (defined as three or more people involved in criminal activity) can be punished with a year in jail. Thus a person in a gang can be found guilty for crimes committed by his or her associates. When gang members are convicted for other crimes they routinely face two- to three-year "sentencing enhancements" for each separate charge. Thus a person convicted of armed robbery with an illegal weapon will have six years added to his sentence if he is "gang labeled."

How does one earn this dubious distinction? In Fresno, as in most of California, law enforcement uses a standardized list of ten criteria to get alleged "street terrorists." The determinations include admitting to gang membership, associating with gang members-, corresponding with gang members; having one's name appear on a gang document, such as a letter; being identified as a gang member by another police agency, having gangstyle tattoos; making gang hand signs; writing gang graffiti; and, most pernicious of all, wearing gang clothing, such as red or blue jackets and baggy pants." If a person meets three of these criteria, he or she is entered into the Cal Gang database as a known gang member. To be deemed an associate, one need meet only two of the standards."

This self-amplifying epistemology generates "offenders" at an exponential rate. Consider the escalating sequence: association with "known gang members" plus baggy pants and voila they open a gang dossier on you. Write a letter to your incarcerated cousin, an alleged gangbanger, and you are moved up the scale a notch from "associate" to "active gang member." Now the people with whom you have frequent contact can be similarly labeled. Thus the more youths labeled "gangbanger," the more people qualified as associates, and so on, in a potentially endless, self-referential cycle." Furthermore, this "paper deviance" - leading to harsh treatment at the hands of the law and time in brutal juvenile prisons -produces real criminality. Punishing youth creates damaged people, who create crime and thus "require" more surveillance, more labeling, and yet more damaging punishment.

The building blocks of this labeling-based deviance mill are the ubiquitous police "field interviews" which first suck youth into the criminal justice net. According to activists in Fresno,

such as gang-truce organizer Homer Leija of Barrios Unidos, many of the MAGEC, Goldstar, and VCSU interrogations are barely legal. "They stop kids, really young kids, without probable cause and ask to search them and interrogate them and take their photos," says Leija. "And a lot of these youngsters have no idea what the law is and just go along with it because they think they have to, but really they're consenting all the way - all the way to jail."

THE "CIVIL" WAR

Perhaps the most radical legal tool to have developed from the paramilitary war on gangs is the use of civil injunctions by criminal prosecutors. Using gang dossiers, district attorneys ask judges to grant injunctions - which are essentially restraining orders - that restrict the activities of named, and even unnamed, alleged gang members, many of whom have never been convicted of any crime. One injunction prohibited 500 mostly Latino, gang members in the San Fernando Valley from gathering in public in combinations of more than two. "The original San Jose, California, injunction prohibited gang members from "standing, sitting, walking, driving, gathering, or appearing anywhere in public view" with any suspected gang member. The listed "gangsters" were also barred from carrying "glass bottles, rocks, bricks, chains, tire irons, screwdrivers, hammers, crowbars, bumper jacks, razor blades, razors, slingshots, marbles, [and] ball bearings." And they are enjoined from "approaching vehicles, engaging in conversation or otherwise communicating with the occupants of any vehicle." These unindicted, unconvicted, unsentenced objects of the law are also prohibited from "making, causing, or encouraging others to make loud noise of any kind."

Part of what makes these civil injunctions so disturbing is that the standard of proof in civil court is much lower than in criminal court, the logic being that the consequences in civil cases are of less magnitude. "But with the anti-gang injunctions civil courts' lower standard of proof is being smuggled into the high-stakes realm of criminal law. As the injunctions proliferate throughout California, prosecutors in other states, such Texas and Illinois, have adopted the tactic."

Another weapon used by the Fresno Police and Sheriff's Departments is the county-wide 10 p.m. curfew for youth under eighteen. As one probation officer put it, the curfew "gives police a tool to contact kids they suspect are likely to engage in anti-social behavior." According to a recent study by the Justice Policy Institute, Fresno police arrested 733 youth for curfew violations in 1997, making their "curfew arrest rate more than twice the state average." Moreover, Fresno's curfew is applied in a racist fashion: Fresno County Latinos are five times more likely than whites to be arrested for curfew violation; while African Americans in the county are three times more likely than whites to be arrested for such violations.

SWAT NATION

As goes California, so goes the nation. Fresno is just one example of a national movement towards paramilitary law enforcement. The routine use of tactical units for everyday policing is common coast to coast. And once established these expensive attack teams become their own justification: big budget outlays compel police departments to show "good use" that is, to deploy their SWAT teams whenever possible. In other words, to demonstrate that the training junkets, trips to regional and national "SWAT competitions," and the monthly paint-ball exercises - which consume the atten-

tion of many a tactical unit - are in fact necessary and cost-effective, SWAT teams must stay busy in the field. Thus paramilitary police units are increasingly called out to execute petty warrants, conduct traffic stops, and round up non-violent suspects. On occasion we even see SWAT teams doing crowd control at official parades in place of regular cops or, more commonly, conducting raids in place of detectives doing investigations. "

Take for example a recent tactical assault in Tacoma, Washington. After a shooting deemed to be Vietnamese-gang-related, police SWAT teams launched pre-dawn raids on nine homes, dragging people from their beds and one naked woman from the shower. In all about forty Southeast Asians were detained all day and interrogated for hours at a time. Almost all the detainees were released for lack of evidence. "It was horrible," said one female prisoner, "We didn't get to use the restrooms, eat or anything until almost 1 p.m. I felt sick when I went home." By all accounts this raid was not the dramatic culmination of careful police work, but was a substitute for lengthy police investigation. Instead of sending detectives to do interviews and follow up leads, the police sent SWAT teams to round up any and all involved parties, most of whom turned out to be innocent.

One of the most infamous SWAT "fishing expeditions" was Operation Ready-Rock, launched in November 1990 by the Chapel Hill police. In response to drug dealing in North Carolina's college-town version of Sodom, the guardians of order received a "blanket" warrant allowing them to search every person and vehicle on the 100 block of Graham Street. The sweep was aimed at what law enforcement viewed as a criminal space. The warrant request explained that

"During the past 10 months, in our personal observations during surveillance, controlled buys and undercover buys, we believe that there are no "innocent" people at this place ... Only drug sellers and drug buyers are on the described premises."

To execute the warrant the CHPD assembled a force of forty-five tactical officers from four different agencies, including the State Bureau of Investigation's elite Special Response Team. The assault force -dressed in combat boots, green camo' battle dress uniforms, body armor, hoods, masks, goggles, and kevlar helmets - armed itself with the usual array of "tactical" gadgetry: less-than-lethal "blunt trauma impact ordinances," chemical sprays, and H&K MP-5s, MP-54s, and Colt AR- 15s. For maximum results, the operation was launched on a Friday night with teams of officers storming the block from all directions, cutting off every path of escape and then combing the area with drug-sniffing dogs. Even amidst the military frenzy the courtesy of the old South prevailed: whites were allowed to leave the area, while more than a hundred African Americans were searched. The warrant also included the search of a pool hall called the Village Connection. In typically "proactive" fashion SWAT commandos made a "dynamic entrance," smashing in the front door and forcing the occupants to the floor at gunpoint. While the captives were searched and interrogated, the bar was ransacked for contraband. The commotion left one elderly man trembling on the floor in a pool of his own urine.

The stunt, costing thousands of dollars in public money, netted thirteen arrests for minor cocaine and methamphetamine possession. The innocent victims of the raid, who spent the evening being berated and humiliated by cops, later filed a mildly successful class action suit. But no police officers were ever reprimanded or punished, nor were new guidelines for drug raids adopted. Some months later, one of the involved units, the State Bureau of Investigation's SRT, shot a cleaning lady

as she fled from a bank where she had been held hostage by would-be thieves.

Elsewhere in North Carolina the popularity of paramilitary police grows vigorously. The most twisted encapsulation of what this means surfaced in Greensboro, where the public library's bus-sized "bookmobile" was, for lack of funds, retired - along with its card catalog, 2,000 volumes, and two librarians. Shortly thereafter, the bookmobile, with plenty of mileage left in it, was converted into a mobile command-and-control center for the Greensboro police department's elite twenty-three member tactical SRT. "It's a great piece of equipment," said a police spokesman. "It's really so much better than what we had before." In the previous van one of the SRT officers, a six-foot-five-inch-tall hulk, had trouble standing up.'

Throughout the country most large-scale tactical sweeps do not even make the local papers. One that did was D-Day, or Operation Jump Start, a full-scale assault on the rough edges of Meriden, Connecticut, a working class city of 75,000. Launched on June 6, 1997 (hence the D-Day reference), the operation involved the New Britain SWAT team, two tactical units from the state police, and scores of back-up units from surrounding jurisdictions. A state police Cessna provided air reconnaissance, while armored personnel carriers and various police trucks ferried the mobile force to and fro as it stormed a slew of locations in search of Los Solidos street gang members. The tactical swarm arrested forty-nine people but many hundreds saw the display of force, were interrogated, searched, and otherwise subjected to the will of the paramilitary invaders. When police treat whole communities as the enemy the results can be grim. For example, on October 30, 1998, a masked and fatigue-clad tactical force of ninety police officers and state agents launched a violent pre-lawn raid on the Martin Luther King and Marcus Garvey resident-owned housing cooperative in San Francisco in search of a drug gang called the Knock Out Posse. During the raid, police commandos blew open doors with special "shock-lock" shotgun rounds, cleared rooms with flash-bang grenades, and took the entire community hostage for several hours.

At a police commission meeting following the operation, a train of furious and sobbing African American victims recounted in scabrous detail how police officers slapped and kicked them, stepped on their necks, and pressed pistol and shotgun muzzles to their heads as other officers ransacked their homes, up-turning beds and ripping open closets. Among those held at gunpoint were city employees and grandmothers; scores of people with no charges against them and clear records were "flex cuffed," including weeping and terrified children as young as six, some of whom urinated in their pajamas as they were separated from their parents. Police Chief Fred Lau explained this last touch - cuffing the kids - was to keep them from "running around." One woman was hospitalized after a fit of seizures, while other people were so distraught they stayed home from work for days. For dramatic effect, a pit bull named Bosco - which many residents described as well liked and friendly - was shot inside an apartment, dragged outside and shot again. A straight-faced deputy police chief, Richard Holder, told commissioners that according to police "intelligence" gathered during "covert operations," the dog was "known for its jumping ability and was shot in mid-air."

All in all, the raid netted eleven arrests, a pound of "high grade" marijuana, less than four ounces of rock cocaine, seven pistols, and \$4,000 in cash - 80 percent of which the SFPD may get to keep and spend, thanks to state and federal asset forfeiture laws. Residents said the money wasn't drug lucre - rather, it had been collected from a circle of friends to

help pay for the funeral of the recently deceased resident Germain Brown.

SWAT TO KILL

The aggressive nature of SWAT operations leads to greater use of violence by both police and their surprised targets. As tactical units proliferate and increase their call-outs, they end up killing more people. A CBS News survey of SWAT encounters showed a 34 percent increase in the use of (leady force between 1995 and 1998. The most egregious case of a violent SWAT mishap involved commandos from the super-elite 2,000 member Navy SEALs who were illegally "training" with a paramilitary police unit in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The target of the raid was a young alleged drug dealer named Manuel Ramirez. To capture their prey the raiding party attached a tow truck cable to Ramirez's front door. As one team smashed in the back windows -- without announcing that they were police - the tow truck ripped the door out of its frame, and masked, helmeted goons swarmed in. Ramirez, asleep on the couch, awoke to the sound of glass breaking and his female cousin screaming about robbers. As he reached for an unloaded pistol the commandos pouring through the gaping front door shot him dead. The ensuing search turned up a brace of "marijuana cigarettes" and a small quantity of crystal methamphetamine.

In 1992 during a tactical raid in Everett, Washington, a sheriff's SWAT team member shot and killed 28-year-old Robin Pratt as she ran to shield her infant daughter. Pratt was not a suspect in the case." A similar moment of confusion led to a Greensboro SWAT team killing 56-year-old Charles Irwin Potts during an over-zealous narcotics raid. As masked commandos kicked in his front door, Potts jumped up from his card game and caught a blast of automatic fire. Officers say Potts was reaching for a gun; two civilian witnesses dispute that claim. No drugs were found in the search." In 1998, in nearby Greenville, South Carolina, SWAT officers shot and killed a unarmed "drug suspect" after an informant gave them bad intelligence.

In relatively sleepy Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, SWAT officers not only killed a suspect while raiding an alleged drugs house, but in the process inadvertently set the building on fire and burnt it down, perhaps due to a faulty flash-bang grenade or tear gas igniting. In Dinuba, California -- population 15,269 - the brand new SWAT team, apparently still unclear on how to read street maps and thinking they were at the lair of serious drug dealers, burst into the bedroom of 64-year-old Carman Gallado. When the retired farmworker reached for a pocket knife the Dinuba SWAT team shot him fifteen times. Gallado's widow later received a massive settlement. Few victims are so lucky.

In December 1996, the Albuquerque SWAT team - so well trained by the Navy SEALs - shot and killed 69-year-old Ralph Garrison as they served a search warrant on two buildings adjoining Garrison's property. Hearing a commotion, Garrison went outside to investigate, and was greeted by armed officers, ensconced in darkness, ordering him back inside. After calling 911 to report suspicious activity and retrieving his handgun, Garrison went back outside, whereupon SWAT officers dispatched the senior with eleven rounds from their submachine guns. "The bereaved widow Garrison set about demanding answers from the tightlipped APD, but the stress and grief soon leveled her by way of a massive stroke. No officers were prosecuted.

Mistaking police raids for robberies is a common theme in SWAT killings. Tactical officers often fail to follow the law
Rattlesnake#1-page 95

and properly identify themselves during raids. This is in part because SWAT units maintain that how they bust suspects (that is, with overwhelming force so as to psychologically demoralize) is just as important as that they bust suspects. For example, the Miami tactical unit (once featured in a nauseatingly uncritical Discovery Channel documentary) raided the home of a senior citizen "drug dealer," who pulled a gun. The police commandos responded with seventy-five lethal rounds from their MP-5s. The victim's fifteen-year-old great-granddaughter, who survived the raid by hiding in the bathroom, said that as police kicked in the door her great-grandfather told her to call 911 because they were being robbed.

Mistaken identity also leads to the accidental death and wounding of tactical officers. This was the case as recently as the fall of 1998, when a deputy in Pierce County, Washington, was shot and killed by Brian Eggleston, a small-time Tacoma pot dealer who, quite credibly, swore he opened fire only because he thought his assailants were burglars.

One group that tends to fare poorly at the hands of pugnacious and heavily armed paramilitary units is the mentally ill. In quiet Canton, Connecticut, a tactical squad known as the North Central Emergency Services Team was sent to bring in a paranoid schizophrenic named Neil Cretney. But Cretney, who had twice been manhandled by the local constabulary because of his strange behavior, was barricaded in his room with what police said was an ax. After only two hours of negotiation the team stormed Cretney's hideout with bullet-proof shields, less-than-lethal bean-bag guns, pepper spray, stun grenades, and tear gas, then used firearms to blow their man to kingdom come. Cretney's relatives say he had long suffered from a "paranoid" premonition that uniformed agents of the state would kill him.

Often the murder of the mentally ill is simply written off as "suicide by cop." To be sure, there are indeed many cases when police are faced with furious adversaries who can and will kill if the officers fail to fire first. And there are also people who do genuinely want to die in a hail of police bullets. But "suicide by cop" is also becoming a facile excuse for killing off the mad. This becomes obvious when one considers the level of threat posed by many of these suicidal adversaries. For example, in 1998 the abovementioned Miami SWAT team shot a sickly 76-year-old man who suffered from advanced emphysema, claiming that he lunged with two kitchen knives so as to provoke their fire. It is hard to believe that a team of huge, armored, shielded cops, with all the time in the world and all the pepper spray and bean-bag rounds they could ever need, had to slay a frail and addled senior citizen.

FRIENDLY AND NOT-SO-FRIENDLY FIRE

Sometimes overly aggressive SWAT officers become their own worst enemies. For example, in late 1998 a tactical officer was shot and wounded by a fellow SWAT member during a botched Dallas raid. He was the third Dallas officer wounded or killed by friendly fire in the last seven years. "That same year a San Bernadino, California, SWAT team exchanged fire with itself after using a flash-bang grenade to raid an empty house. Amidst the smoke and confusion one tactical officer mistook his comrade for a "bad guy" and opened fire, hitting his fellow cop in the leg; the wounded officer returned fire as he went down." A year and a half earlier, the Oxnard, California, SWAT team had similar problems while serving a search warrant on a two-story townhouse that turned out to be empty. "During the operation, officer James Jensen threw a flash grenade onto a second floor landing. The explosion sent smoke into surrounding rooms. Jensen and other SWAT team members, including Sgt. Daniel Christian, stormed the second floor, and in the turmoil Christian

mistook Jensen for a gun-wielding criminal" and blasted his colleague with three rounds of double-naught buckshot from his 12gauge. The direct hits killed Jensen on the spot." After this "tragic mishap" much soul-searching ensued, as did a multi-million-dollar lawsuit, filed by Jensen's devastated widow. But less than a year later the Oxnard SWAT team blundered again. This time the crew was responding to a domestic disturbance call from an eight-year-old who said his parents were arguing. The SWAT team surrounded the house and demanded that the suspect surrender. But as the belligerent and unarmed husband, Larry Panky, emerged, senior officer Scott Hebert lost his cool and opened fire, killing Panky. A DA investigation later exonerated Officer Hebert on the grounds that he mistook shots from his comrades' less-than-lethal weapons as an exchange of gunfire between Panky and the police.

When SWAT officers are shot by suspects the responding wrath is awesome. Consider for example the case of Visalia, California, SWAT officer James Rapozo, who was caught by a slug in the armpit as his team crashed into the home of sixteen-year-old Alfonso Hernandez. In response to Rapozo falling his SWAT brothers opened up with a fusillade of lead that literally ground Hernandez's corpse to a ragged mess, riddled with thirty-nine fragmenting rounds. SWAT slugs also pierced the walls into adjacent apartments, forcing people to dive for cover, and in one case almost hitting an occupied baby crib. Another man inside at the time, nineteen-year-old Emiliano Trevino, took cover in a corner as the shooting started and was hit five times."

Even more ghastly were the recent actions of the Portland, Oregon, Special Emergency Reaction Team. Just before midnight on January 27, 1998, a black-clad team of SERT raiders besieged a house occupied by a lone gunman dressed in body armor and equipped with a stockpile of assault rifles and ammunition. As TV choppers beat overhead, SERT commandos shot it out with the suspect, loading the house with tear gas and moving in under the cover of an APC. By the time the siege ended two cops had been wounded and a third was dead. Officers, described by observers as "frenzied," finally stormed the bullet-riddled building and dragged out the wounded suspect. Once on the lawn officers stripped and searched their captive, then lashed him to the tailgate of an armored SWAT van and paraded the bloodied perp' like a dead buck as the van made its way to the hospital.

SNOUTS IN THE FEDERAL TROUGH

As tactical raids and paramilitary sweeps become more common, the common police take on more paramilitary attributes. In other words, paramilitary policing units militarize the regular police by osmosis as the weaponry, training, and tactics of the police special forces are gradually passed on to the regular police. In that vein, numerous departments are starting to equip their regular officers with semiautomatic and fully automatic assault rifles. Leading the way is the LAPD. The catalyst there was the much storied North Hollywood shoot-out - in which two heavily armed gangsters re-enacted the spectacular shoot-out scene from the film *Heat* by coolly blasting away at the LAPD after a botched bank heist. The bank robbers had chosen to go out in paramilitary style: along with black jumpsuits, ski masks, and body armor they carried a cache of high-powered military assault rifles and hundreds of rounds of ammunition. Much of the action

was caught on video by news helicopters and is now endlessly recycled by "docudrama" TV shows like Cops. The media-savvy LAPD, making the most of the fact that its officers were momentarily outgunned - they commandeered weapons from a nearby gun store - promptly ordered 600 M-16s from the Defense Department. With that the race was on.

Following the bloody Portland raid of 1998, Chief Charles Moose followed suit by giving his troops AR15s, at a cost of \$310,000. So far the new military rifles have provoked very little political complaint, from either the Black community (which will, no doubt, end up facing this new arsenal) or from Portland's overly abundant lifestyle-liberals. When the police received shotguns in 1975, there was at least some public acrimony accompanying the escalation. Numerous departments in Florida are also buying AR-15s and M-16s for their regular beat officers, the Orlando Police Department being one of the largest. The Orange County Sheriff's Office also bought a shipment of 261 M-16s, while the Sheriff's Office in Fort Lauderdale ordered a cache of Ruger Mini 14 semiautomatics (the weapon of choice among many prison guards)." And, as the big cities rearm, so too must the small town constabulary, who fancy themselves as miniature versions of "the real thing." For example, police in Apopka, Florida, worried about "well-armed criminals" and incapable of imagining local gun control, is spending federal grant money to buy ten AR-15 semiautomatic rifles for its ten sergeants. This despite the fact that Apopka's seventy-five officers have only fired their weapons in the line of duty six times in the last thirty years. In Pinole, California, it was revealed that police were using MP-5s during routine patrols when they shot a man during a domestic dispute.

Facilitating the transfer of surplus military weapons and gear to the police are a number of federal agencies, foremost among them the Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO) in Fort Belvoir, Virginia, a branch of the Defense Logistics Agency. As journalist Peter Cassidy found out, "In 1997 alone law enforcement agencies obtained 1.2 million pieces of military hardware. During the 1995-97 fiscal years, the Department of Defense distributed to civilian departments more than 3,800 M-16s, 2,185 M-14s, 73 M-79 grenade launchers, and 112 armored personnel carriers." (One outfit calls its APC "mother," while another in east Texas calls theirs "bubba one" and "bubba two.") Overall, more than 11,000 police agencies have received such equipment for free, paying only transportation or shipping costs. Among the recipients are cops in twenty-three states who received 6,400 bayonets during 1996-97. One bayonet-equipped agency assured the press that the long knives would only be used for cutting down pot plants.

"Basically, you go in and take the stuff you want," said an Air Force officer in charge of coordinating a Midwestern branch of the LESO. "For example, if you have a small police department, and funds are limited, you can contact us and we can get you a police car for nothing."

Surveying public reaction to this proliferation of military-style organization and firepower, it seems that Americans have once again mistaken quantity for quality. The simple theorem seems to run as follows: the more gear, the more effective the force; the higher the caliber, the better the weapon; the more violence, the better the policing. This false equivalence between the capacity for state violence and public safety is hard to shake, especially when the whole discourse of law enforcement takes place within a larger context of increasingly racist, anti-poor demagoguery. Victim-blaming is the currency of mainstream politics. And the discourse of victim-blaming quickly turns into one of enemy-making and from there into a discourse of war. As economic contradictions deepen, the racialized class Other -- the immigrant, the urban mendicant, the cheats, the dark-skinned, the "thieves," and

"predators" - looms ever larger in the minds of the economically besieged middle and working classes. As politicians face the fact that the corporate system will not and cannot profitably accommodate the needs of the poor and working majority, they necessarily turn to crime-baiting and racially coded demonology as a way of inciting, mobilizing, and diverting legitimate political anxieties towards irrelevant enemies.

THE CULTURE OF MILITARISM

In reality, military technology and training do not make people safer. Military gear brings embedded in it a set of militaristic social relations. Aggressive group tactics, automatic weapons, and infrared scopes all displace and preclude the social skills, forbearance, and individual discretion essential to accountable and effective civilian policing. The metaphor of war also implies the possibility of victory in which one side vanquishes another. Thus one impact of the new paramilitary police technology is a "culture of militarism" that gestates in the world of tactical policing. Peter Kraska, the pre-eminent sociologist of SWAT, argues that young officers find the military regalia of SWAT "culturally intoxicating." In part this is because "the elite self-perception and status granted these police units stems from the high status military special operations groups have in military culture."

But the military world-view is not confined to the ranks of SWAT. Tactical units, having close relations with the armed forces, act as ideological transmission-belts between the military and the regular police. As we saw above, the use of automatic weapons is already spreading from the military to SWAT teams, and from there to regular cops. Promulgating the gospel of war and "special ops" is even written into the mission of many tactical units. Fresno's VCSU, like the L.A. and Miami SWAT teams, spends much of its time training regular rank-and-file police in the special arts of what increasingly looks like low-intensity conflict, or counterinsurgency warfare.

The culture of militarism is also fostered by the weapons industry, professional associations of tactical officers (which are organized at a state, regional, and national level), and a slew of magazines, books, and videos aimed at cops and gun freaks. Foremost among these "cultural mediators" is the National Tactical Officers Association (the largest SWAT officers association) and its publication Tactical Edge, which is marketed exclusively to police; civilians are prohibited from subscribing. Tactical Edge is best described as "news you can use" for SWAT officers. Articles cover new law enforcement technology (long exegeses on ammunition testing are common), tactics, conferences, and the politics of managing SWAT teams in what the authors usually perceive as a misinformed and hostile political environment. Many of the writers have impressive backgrounds in policing, spooking, and law enforcement planning. And most of what appears in Tactical Edge has a pragmatic, clinical tone. For example:

'The sniper team is most often considered to have primary responsibility for delivering "real time" intelligence information during the course of an operation. Don't forget, however, that the officers manning the inner perimeter are in excellent positions to complement and expand upon a sniper's efforts in this area. By virtue of their location, inner perimeter team members are often in better positions to detect both visual

and audible indicators of activity that can be crucial to identifying a suspect's location and anticipating his actions.

Less secretive and very widely read is the magazine SWAT, subtitled "Special Weapons and Tactics for the Prepared American." Published by Larry Flint, of Hustler fame, SWAT's ammunition and weapons reviews are peppered with lines like "tactical officers and home owners will be glad to know . . ." These panegyrics generally read like pornography for gun nuts and over-eager cops. For example: "During penetration, the prestressed Quick Shok projectile expands rapidly and then splits into three even sections. These segments or fragments penetrate in separate directions in an ever-widening pattern inside a soft target. Fragmentation is the main cause of tissue disruption."

Like Tactical Edge, SWAT is replete with articles analyzing new hollow-point shells, fragmenting rounds, bean-bag rounds, H&K weapons, training opportunities, etc. But SWAT also indulges in easy-reading profiles of tactical squads and special operations groups from around the world. Dozens of similar cop-oriented publications and scores of books and videos also promulgate the paramilitary, technophilic police culture. Woven into this discourse is a right-wing political world-view in which impending chaos is held back only by the besieged, misunderstood men and women of law enforcement who, despite the efforts of pernicious liberals, endeavor to protect the public and face up to the ever greater challenge of "better armed criminals ... bigger and more violent street gangs ... increased numbers of extremists [and] increased violent crime."

CONCLUSION: THE SPECTACLE OF TERROR

If there is a parable to be drawn from the story of paramilitary policing in the US, it is that the political theatrics of terror are by no means dead. Physical terror and spectacular displays of violence are still central to the state's control of the dangerous classes. The helicopters, guns, and constantly barking (logs of the American tactical army are a blunt semaphore to the lumpen classes and working poor. So too are the frequent gang sweeps, field interviews, and curfew busts. In all cases the message is clear: "They wouldn't do this in north Fresno," is the constant refrain from that city's working class African Americans and Latinos." The VCSU, like many SWAT teams, even brags about the "deterrent" effect of its high-profile ruthlessness. The point is that ritualized displays of terror are built into American policing. Spectacle is a fundamental part of how the state controls poor people. As one VCSU sergeant put it: "They see our big gray SWAT bus, and the weapons, and they know we mean business."

If violent theatrics help insinuate the power of the state into the everyday life of the ghetto, then Michel Foucault's thesis - that power is increasingly exercised through relatively invisible, increasingly medicalized discursive means, such as psychiatry, psychology, medicine, and social sciences - seems in need of revision.

In Discipline and Punish, Foucault argues that the history of punishment and social control in Europe (or more particularly France) involves a shift from punishing the body directly to controlling subjectivity, the soul, or the human interior, thus making bodies docile and useful. Foucault focuses on the spectacular public torture rituals of the ancien regime, in which the sovereign re-established power by taking revenge upon the body of the criminal. Foucault then traces the ruptures that lead to modern "disciplinary" forms of control; forms of power that act upon human consciousness and subjectivity, and thus enlist us in the useful, productive regulation of ourselves and our bod-

ies. Thus he writes, "[t]he soul is the effect and instrument of a political anatomy: the soul is the prison of the body."

For Foucault this shift is not a history of improved human rights or moral progress, but rather one of increasingly effective, totalizing, and pernicious mechanisms of social regulation. While public executions may at first glance seem rather a muscular expression of legal power, they were, as Foucault argues, dangerously inefficient, wasteful, and almost haphazard affairs. Foremost among public torture's inefficiencies was the role of the crowd, to which far too much power was distributed. The spectators, a central part of the ritual of public torture and execution, sometimes rebelled and rioted, attacking the scaffold to free or kill the prisoners and in other ways disrupt the power of the sovereign. As a result punishment was increasingly hidden and professionalized, its effects made more constant and continuous. The ancient art of torture and confession transmogrified into the modern methods of investigation and interrogation by which judicial truth and the inner workings of the modern delinquent are known. And thus was born the criminal subject, with free will, a sense of morality, and a "soul."

This progression, away from sovereign power towards "disciplinary power" or "bio-power" is, for Foucault, linked to the development of capitalism and industrial society's need for more constant and totalizing exploitation of bodies. "Thus discipline produces subjected and practiced, 'docile' bodies. Discipline increases the force of the body (in economic terms of utility) and diminished these same forces of the body (in political terms of obedience) . . ."

From the vantage point of the late sixties, the height of the therapeutic, rehabilitation era, the age of "full employment" in many European economies, this argument made sense. The increasing embourgeoisement of the European and American working classes, the medicalization of social problems like poverty, and the totalizing modernist faith in rational and technical solutions to all human problems, gave resonance to the continued progression of Foucault's thesis. In the name of science and increased humanity, social control was achieved less and less through the semiotics of physical terror and increasingly through scientific explanations and therapeutic interventions that turned the deviant into his or her own regulator, thus producing useful and docile bodies.

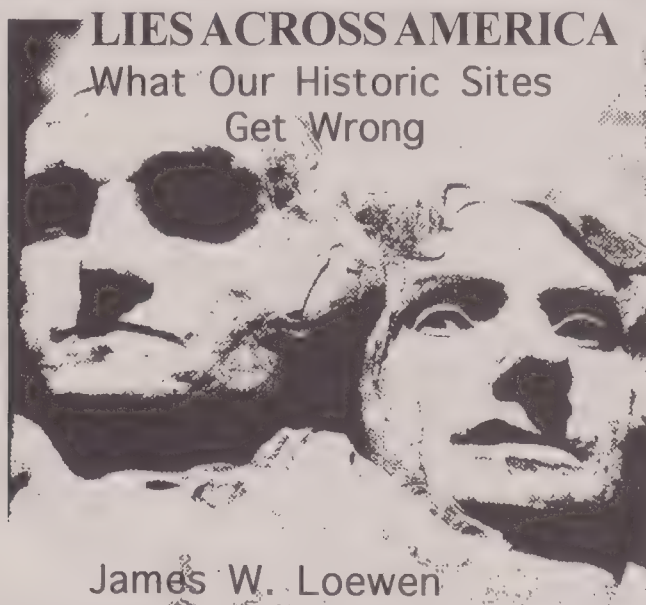
But as the class terrain of advanced capitalist society began to bifurcate in response to the profit crisis of the early seventies and its neoliberal solutions, so too has social control. The middle classes still immerse themselves in the discursive prisons of "self-help" and self-actualization; their deviance is "sickness" (addictions, compulsions, and other maladies); their cure is an attempt to function better, realize their "full potential," maximum health, find spiritual "wholeness," achieve "proper time management," business success, etc. But on the other side of the class divide, amidst the social and economic wreckage of the down-sized American dream, the energy of bodies and minds is not so needed. Here deviance is no longer seen as individual sickness, as it was during rehabilitation's heyday. Rather, the surplus classes are simply bad people made so by a corrosive "culture of poverty" or, in the Charles Murray school of thought, by crypto-racist, "genetic" deficiencies. Thus the "superpredators" - as neoconservative criminologist Di Iulio calls the impoverished pre-teens of America - and "lost generations" of the ghetto cannot be saved, or used efficiently. And so we see state power once again manifest in an increasingly violent, ritualized politics of terror. As "actuarial" crime control becomes

the name of the criminological game, whole communities become the target of social control.

After all, paramilitary sweeps, like the public executions of the ancien regime, "make everyone aware, through the body of the criminal, of the unrestrained presence of the sovereign [or in this case, the modern state and its police]. The public execution [like a paramilitary police sweep] did not re-establish justice: it reactivated power." Nor are SWAT operations in public space the only site of such ritualized displays: the courts, the jail house visiting room, the cell block, and the endless - seemingly looped - real-life action footage of shows like Cops, LAPD, and True Stories of the Highway Patrol all serve to distribute terror into the everyday lives of the poor. This classbiased shift away from reform toward an updated discourse of evil makes sense: many bodies - particularly those of young working class and lumpen men of color - are superfluous to capital's valorization. A growing stratum of "surplus people" is not being efficiently used by the economy. So instead they must be controlled and contained and, in a very limited way, rendered economically useful as raw material for a growing corrections complex.

Perhaps this explains why social control, in the broadest sense, has bifurcated in ways Foucault never fully examined and why the seemingly soft, scientific discourses of "deviance" and "rehabilitation" have given way to a new, more cynical, rhetoric of war, law enforcement armies, lost generations, and "bad guys."

----(Christian Parenti lives in San Francisco and is working on another book as well as writing excellent columns for the local SF Bay Guardian)



Astute review of America's past. Reads like Zinn traveling the country mapping what the powers that be want to omit from history. (The New Press)

He is also the author of

LIES MY TEACHER TOLD ME

Essential in its dissection of bland, often meaningless, and often very wrong high school and college history texts. History is made of events interrelated not random acts or memorization of state sanctioned "significant" dates.

The man is very friendly; he answered a personal e-mail and authorized a free reprint.

Also wrote: *The Truth About Columbus*, and *The Mississippi Chinese*

JAMES LOEWEN from the book

Lies Across America Serving The Cause Of Humanity

MINNESOTA St. Paul

America is full of statues and plaques that seem to commemorate the Spanish-American War. just as "the doughboy"-the lone infantryman wearing a heavy metal helmet-became the symbol for World War 1, "the hiker"-a bare-headed GI casually holding a rifle-appeared on many Spanish-American War memorials. The National Association of Spanish War Veterans is said to have placed at least fifty copies of this statue all around the country.(1) Combat in the Spanish-American War began on May 1, 1898, and ended August 13 of that year. The U.S. navy destroyed the Spanish Pacific fleet in Manila Bay on May 1 and the Spanish Atlantic fleet off Santiago de Cuba July 3. Two weeks later Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders helped compel the surrender of Santiago de Cuba, effectively ending the war. Troops under Nelson Miles took Puerto Rico with almost no opposition. In the entire war only 379 Americans died in battle; 1,604 were wounded. How did a hundred-day war wind up with a five-year timespan on its monuments?

The answer to this puzzle points to one of America's least happy foreign adventures-our war with the Philippines. Hostilities in the Philippine-American War began on February 4, 1899, half a year after the Spanish-American War ended. On July 4, 1902, Theodore Roosevelt, who became president upon McKinley's assassination, declared the war won. Hence the '1898-1902.'

Except for the curious dates on our Spanish-American war memorials, the Philippine-American War lies almost forgotten on our landscape. One of the few places that openly recognizes this war is a large bronze plaque in the rotunda of the Minnesota State Capitol. It honors the Thirteenth Minnesota All Volunteer Infantry as "one of the first regiments to carry the American flag across the seas." It mentions how this unit "participated in Battle of Manila, August 13th, 1898, ending the War with Spain." The plaque then details where the men fought next, as part of the United States army in the Philippine-American War: "Military Police of Manila, August 22nd (1898) to March 17th, 1899. Volunteered for the Philippine Insurrection on March 25th. Sent to the front in the campaign against insurgent Filipinos under Chief Aguinaldo." In one way this marker is a good thing: Minnesota at least recognizes that the Philippine-American War took place. But almost every phrase on it is a lie.

The Thirteenth Minnesota never volunteered for "the Philippine Insurrection." John Roberts, a bugler in the unit, said on his return, "We enlisted to fight the Spaniards, to fight them for two years if necessary, but we did not enlist to fight niggers in the Philippines, and if we had been asked to do so 1, for one, would have refused." The McKinley administration sold the Spanish-American War to the American people on the grounds that the Span-

ish were colonial overlords and the oppressed people of Cuba, in particular, deserved to govern themselves. So the volunteering done by the Thirteenth Minnesota, although couched in racist terms by Roberts, involved a good measure of idealism.

Moreover, there was no "Philippine Insurrection." This term suggests that the United States held legitimate power in the Philippines, against which some Filipinos rebelled. Nothing of the sort was true. This was a war of conquest by an outside power, not an insurrection by a subordinate faction. The Filipino independence movement controlled most of the nation including all of the main island of Luzon except Manila when the United States attacked. Filipinos date their independence from June 12, 1898, before the American army even got there, and celebrated their centennial in 1998. They are clear about the role of the United States as invader. American historians too now agree on the more accurate "Philippine-American War."

The last two words, "Chief Aguinaldo," are sillier yet. The Filipinos were not American Indians; Emilio Aguinaldo was no "chief." After the United States attacked the Filipinos, United States leaders tried to portray the war as some kind of uprising limited to a few "tribes." Earlier, when the Filipinos were our allies against Spain, American officials had considered Aguinaldo the leader of all Filipinos.

The United States sent some 125,000 troops to the Philippines. About 10,000 lost their lives including 4,234 who died in combat. Another 1,818 were wounded. Thus the war was almost ten times as hurtful to our population as the Spanish-American War. Indeed, in absolute numbers more Americans died in combat in the Philippine-American War than died in the American Revolution or the War of 1812—more, in fact, than in all but six of our wars.(3) Still more Americans died of disease in the Philippines. For the other side it was "the bloodiest conflict in Philippines history, including World War 11," according to historian Leon Wolff. Americans killed and counted the bodies of 16,000 Filipino soldiers; total Filipino combat deaths exceeded 20,000. Among the civilian population, deaths from combat, disease, and starvation exceeded 200,000 and possibly reached 700,000. Thus in duration, effort, and losses at least, the Philippine-American War far overshadows the Spanish-American War. Since monuments are expressly intended to recognize effort and losses, every Spanish-American War monument in the United States might reasonably be renamed. Even the images on them didn't come from the Spanish-American War. "The hiker" and "hiking" were terms used by U.S. soldiers in the Philippine-American War to describe themselves and their campaigns to root out Filipino guerrillas from their mountain strongholds. In the Spanish-American War, the United States mostly attacked cities.

If more memorials noted the Philippine-American War, Americans might remember it better.(4) As a citizen who came of age politically during the war in Vietnam, I have come to regret that neither I nor most Americans recalled the Philippines War in the 1960s, for it was a lost memory that might have prevented the war. Parallels between the two wars are many. In both countries the United States initially allied with a colonized people and then turned on

them, reestablishing colonialism. The Filipino independence movement had been our ally against Spain, just as Ho Chi Minh's forces in Vietnam had been our allies against Japan during World War 11. In the Philippines, the United States simply replaced Spain as the colonial master. In Vietnam, after Japan fell, the United States first tried to prop up France, the previous European colonial ruler, before installing its own puppet regime in South Vietnam after the Vietnamese ousted the French.

Even more than in most wars, truth was the first casualty in the Philippines and in Vietnam. Deception began from the outset when United States officials lied to explain why our troops were now fighting the Filipinos. (78 tells how we actually came to attack them.) In Vietnam the United States claimed to be "defending" the "nation" of South Vietnam against "outside aggression," while in reality American forces were the outside aggressors.

In both wars, the administration lied to the American people about the "progress" of the war. In the Philippines army officials kept journalists from many parts of the islands and censored their reports to the United States. Eleven correspondents sent a joint news story to their papers, charging that official dispatches "err in saying 'the situation is well in hand'" and had given Americans "an ultra-optimistic view that is not shared by the general officers in the field." In Vietnam, veteran correspondents labeled the armed forces' daily briefings "the five o'clock follies" and laughed when officials continued to see the "light at the end of the tunnel." This report to the New York Post from the Philippines by Albert Robinson could have been filed seventy years later from Vietnam by merely changing the last word to "Saigon": "There are towns here which have been 'captured' again and again, each time with a 'glorious victory.' Today it is unsafe for an American to go even ten miles from the city of Manila."

As in Vietnam there were no front lines in the Philippines war, and as in Vietnam, soldiers could not easily discern friend- "amigo" -from foe. The results were not surprising—GI's adopted the slogan "There are no more amigos." Generals declared that all civilians must enter "reconcentration camps" (in Vietnam officials would call them "strategic hamlets"), and anyone outside them would be fair game. In both Vietnam and the Philippines, American troops called the enemy "gooks"; white Americans also used the term "nigger" for Filipino enemies.

The Minnesota plaque lists twenty battles in which the men participated and ten generals under whom they fought, followed by details of their mustering out. To the left of the list is a beautifully done scene of American soldiers attacking a village on Luzon. The typical sightseer, not having read accounts by participants, would have no idea what happened after the soldiers took that generic Luzon village. "We have been vastly more cruel than the Spanish," said Roberts. "I have known of orders being given which, if put in writing, would read, in effect: Let there be no wounded among the enemy." Private A. A. Barnes of the Third Artillery wrote from Luzon to his brother in Indiana: "Last night one of our boys was found shot and his stomach cut open. Immediately orders were received from General [Frank] Wheaton to burn the town and kill every native in sight; which was done..." L.

F. Adams from Missouri wrote home about another campaign in Luzon: "In the path of the Washington regiment ... there were 1,008 dead niggers and a great many wounded. We burned all their houses. I don't know how many men, women, and children the Tennessee boys did kill. They would not take any prisoners."

These were no isolated incidents. After a Filipino attack on a U.S. army post on Samar killed 38 of 74 men and wounded another 30, Brig. Gen. Jake Smith was told to "pacify" the island. He ordered all civilians out of the island's interior and confined them in stockades. "Turn the entire island into a howling wilderness," he told his troops. "I want no prisoners. I wish you to kill and burn; the more you kill and burn the better it will please me." All male persons over age ten who had not already surrendered were to be shot. "Within six months Samar was as quiet as a cemetery," concluded historian Leon Wolff. Wolff quoted an observer, "Even the Spaniards are appalled at American cruelty."

As in Vietnam, war crimes committed by U.S. personnel in the Philippines "seldom saw the light of day," in Wolff's words; "those that did were systematically denied or minimized." In Vietnam, except for one man, Lt. William Calley, who drew a few years of house arrest for ordering and administering the murders of civilians in the My Lai massacre, no American received significant punishment for war crimes. In the Philippines there was not even a Calley. The army brought up several officers and men on charges, but officials realized that the responsibility for the outrages led straight up the chain of command, so most got off with reprimands, some with small fines.

There are still more parallels with the war in Vietnam. American soldiers despised their assignments, so rot appeared in the army, and a serious antiwar movement arose at home. As in Vietnam, hawks then claimed that antiwar agitation was raising enemy morale, hence prolonging the war. Neither war stemmed from direct pressure by American commercial interests, which had no significant investments to protect in either country. Individual political leaders—McKinley and Roosevelt in the Philippines, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon in Vietnam—made the fateful decisions to send and maintain troops to subjugate the Asians we claimed to be helping.⁽⁶⁾

Another parallel between the wars was the popularity of the Filipino and Vietnamese revolutionary leaders compared with the unpopularity of the puppet leaders the U.S. installed. Dwight Eisenhower admitted that in a fair election, Ho Chi Minh would win 80 percent of the votes in Vietnam. John Bass, writing in Harper's decades earlier, said the same about Aguinaldo: "The whole population of the islands sympathizes with the insurgents; only those natives whose immediate self-interest requires it are friendly to us." And for that reason both wars lasted a long time.

Vietnam is often called our longest war, but depending upon the date chosen for its ending, the

Philippine-American War arguably lasted longer. When President Roosevelt declared victory on July 4, 1902, nobody really celebrated. Military historian John Collins judged that the war dragged on to 1913. Serious incidents continued as late as 1916.

When Americans swept the Philippine-American War under the rug of our Spanish American War memorials, we lost our collective memory of it. In 1926, Moorfield Storey and Marcial Lichauco published a farsighted critique of the war, *The Conquest of the Philippines by the United States, 1898-1925*. They asked, "Why revive these memories that we would fain obliterate?" They answered by pointing out that Americans were still lying about the war: "With all this history behind him, the President of the United States [in 1925] still asserts that the islands came to us 'unsought.'" Finally, they argued that if we stay ignorant of this history, "what American representatives have done in the past may be done again." They meant in the Philippines, but their words had wider prophetic implications. Americans on all sides of the Vietnam War invoked various analogies to campaign for or against our involvement there—Munich, the domino theory,

Korea, and the like. Few referred to the Philippines war however—a pity, because that analogy would have been so close.

The Minnesota plaque, only slightly superior to total amnesia, employs an astonishing paragraph to summarize the war: "They served the cause of humanity. They battled to free the oppressed peoples of the Philippines Islands, who suffered under the despotic rule of Spain." If soldiers from the Thirteenth Minnesota All Volunteer Infantry coming home on October 12, 1899, could have seen it, they would have laughed those words off the wall. On that day President McKinley joined Minnesota Governor John Lind to welcome the troops home to Minneapolis. In the presence of the president, Lind used the occasion to raise troubling questions about American imperialism. "By our growth and development the mission of the American volunteer soldier has come to an end. For purposes of conquest and subjugation he is unfit, for he carries a conscience as well as a gun. The volunteer soldier has always stood for self-government, liberty, and justice."

By 1948 when the plaque went up, American imperialism apparently no longer troubled anyone. Half a century of U.S. interventions had made sending troops into other countries seem routine. But in 1998 a group of Filipino Americans and other Minnesota citizens got a temporary exhibit installed in the rotunda of the Capitol that presented accurate information about the Philippine-American War. They are now trying to persuade state officials to allow a permanent corrective plaque to go alongside or instead of this 1948 delusion. Their example shows that Americans are not forced to remain ignorant of the Philippine-American War or other history. The final essay in this book, "Getting into a Dialogue with the Landscape," suggests that we can still correct our Spanish-American War monuments all across the country to reflect more accurately the wars they memorialize. It is too late for such an enlightened landscape to have an impact on our 1960s Southeast Asian policy, but Grenada, Panama, and other escapades show that the United States still finds it easy to fight "splendid little wars" in the Third World. We cannot know how recovering our memory of the Philippine-American War will affect America's future as a nation, but our Vietnam debacle demonstrates that ignorance

of this war has hardly been bliss.

footnotes

- 1.. At least 26 hikers by Theodora Ruggles Kitson still stand along with at least 24 by other sculptors.
2. Sometimes "China" is added instead of "Porto Rico" or "U.S.A.," adding in another unrelated war, the Boxer Rebellion.
3. In order, America's ten deadliest wars have been the Civil War, World War II, World War I, Vietnam, Korea, the Mexican War, the Philippines War, King Philip's War, the Revolution, and the War of 1812.
4. American history textbooks also promote amnesia; they devote almost eight pages to the Spanish-American War and only a paragraph or two to the Philippines War. The army also needs to recall the Philippines War more honestly. Its website lists the Spanish-American War but not the Philippines War among its "major wars." The army really knows better; another inventory, "Campaigns of the United States Army," lists eleven different campaigns under "Philippines Insurrection," only three under Spanish-American War.
5. Another account lists 48 dead and 22 wounded.
6. I would grant that American commercial interests played a "cultural" role in both interventions. Some American political leaders saw the Philippines as a base that could be used to further United States interests in China and throughout the Far East. Some American political leaders believed that our intervention in Vietnam would further United States interests in other Third World countries.

Another excerpt from Loewen's *Lies Across America*.

CALIFORNIA San Francisco

A cul-de-sac off El Camino Del Mar near 28th Avenue in San Francisco leads to a lovely stretch of publicly owned coastline. At the head of the trail down to the beach is a large trapezoidal stone marker placed by Chinese Americans in 1981:

CHINA BEACH

'Since Gold Rush times, this cove was used as a campsite by many of the Chinese fishermen who worked in and around San Francisco Bay. Their efforts to supply the needs of a young city helped establish one of the area's most important industries and traditions.'

It's proper to have some Chinese American history on the California landscape because Chinese Americans played a major role in the West, not just building the railroads but also in mining, farming, business, personal service, heavy construction, and as this marker tells, fishing. Indeed, in the early 1880s Chinese Americans made up 50 percent of all fishing crews in the Bay area. But this marker tells only half the story.

During most of the twentieth century, the beach was not called China Beach but Phelan Beach. That's because whites expelled Chinese people from the beach and from the fishing industry in the 1890s. In 1880, California passed "An Act Relating to Fishing in the Waters of this State": "All aliens incapable of becoming electors of this state are hereby prohibited from fishing, or taking any fish, lobster, shrimps, or shell fish of any kind, for the purpose of selling, or giving to an-

other person to sell..." Conveniently, only Chinese were aliens not eligible to vote. Courts declared the bill unconstitutional under the 14th Amendment, but the legislature continued to pass similar measures until the end of the century. California's senators got Congress to pass the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1881, which cut Chinese immigration from 39,500 in 1882 to just ten persons five years later. Meanwhile white fishermen resorted to extralegal strong-arm tactics. By 1890 only 20 percent of the fishing community were Chinese, and their numbers continued to dwindle the rest of the century.

"By 1893, riots and boycotts in San Francisco and the farming districts of California created conditions approximating civil war," according to a 1997 exhibit at the Autry Museum in Los Angeles. White thuggery forced many Chinese Americans back to Chinatowns for protection. Prejudice against Chinese Americans ran so high that San Francisco's public schools admitted African Americans to desegregated schools in 1899 and Native Americans in 1921, but kept Chinese Americans out until 1929. That Chinese Americans would note on the landscape their success in fishing but not their exclusion from it is not surprising. While doing research for my book *The Mississippi Chinese*, I found that some young Chinese Mississippians knew only vaguely that whites had until recently kept them out of white public schools and other institutions. Their parents had never told them, perhaps feeling it would only disempower their children to know that dominant whites had oppressed them. Nor is this a uniquely Chinese trait: the introductory essay "In What Ways Were We Warped?" tells how working-class white families often do not inform their children of the trials they faced. African Americans in the 1990s expressed regret to family historian Edward Ball that the survivors of slavery didn't tell their "children things they should have told them." Shame may also be a factor—a group's sense that its members must have done something to cause the powers that be to oppose them so strongly.

Some might argue to leave the China Beach marker as it is—let bygones be bygones. But all too often, all across America, historic sites emphasize only the good parts of our past. Surely historian Paul Gagnon is correct to say, "We do not need a bodyguard of lies. We can afford to present ourselves in the totality of our acts." Rather than leaving out the bad parts, as this marker does, hoping that anti-Chinese sentiments will never recur, San Franciscans could engage in a civic dialogue to formally declare the beach China Beach. Thus they would dishonor rather than continue to honor the anti-Chinese sentiments exemplified in Mayor Phelan's career. (*)

(*). In about 1983 the National Park Service, which owns the site, reverted to "China Beach." By 1998 some San Franciscans knew it only as Phelan Beach while others knew it only as China Beach. Calling China Beach Phelan Beach was ironically appropriate because James Phelan, three-term mayor of San Francisco at the end of the century, argued for excluding all Asians from the United States. As mayor, he allowed a blockade and later a quarantine of Chinatown; as U.S. Senator from California, 1915-21, he supported laws keeping Japanese from owning land in the state.

WORLD HUNGER

Twelve Myths- Frances Moore Lappe,

Joseph Collins, Peter Rosset

A chapter excerpt Reflections on Famine

Famines, it turns out, are not natural disasters but social disasters, the result of human arrangements, not acts of God. Blaming nature, we fail to see that human institutions determine:

- Who will have a claim to food. As long as people's only claim to food is through the market-and incomes and prices remain volatile people will die in famines no matter how much food is produced.

- Who will be chronically vulnerable. Famines are generally a disaster for the poor but an opportunity for the rich. When good rains finally return or when floodwaters recede, in most societies people's access to food-producing resources doesn't return to what it was before. Poor farmers and poor herders who were vulnerable before are likely to have been made more insecure.

- The vulnerability of the agricultural system itself-soil, drainage, seed to drought and other natural adversities. As long as people are forced by economic pressures to abuse the soil and to forgo time-tested conservation practices, poor harvests will become more common. Who will use hunger against whom. Food is often used as a weapon of war, and hunger is always a product of it.

If we believe that famines are caused by nature's vagaries, we will feel helpless and therefore excused from action. Learning that famines result from human-made forces, we discover hope. No one can change the weather, but we can take responsibility for establishing more stable farming systems and altering the economic rules so that people's claim to food may never be denied. Only in this direction can we further humanity's age-old quest for food security.

CHAPTER 4

Myth 4: Food vs. Our Environment

MYTH: Pressure to feed the world's hungry is destroying the very resources needed to grow food. To feed the hungry, we are pushing crop and livestock production onto marginal, erosion-prone lands, clearing age-old rain forests, and poisoning the environment with pesticides. Clearly, we cannot both feed the hungry and protect our environment.

OUR RESPONSE: We should be alarmed. A many-pronged assault on the environment is damaging the resources on which food production depends. Environmental scientists alert us to these threats:

- Roughly 70 percent of the 5.2 billion hectares of dry lands used for agriculture around the world-almost 30 percent of the earth's total land area-is at risk of being turned into deserts. More than one billion people in 135 countries depend on this land.

- If current rates of destruction continue, the world's surviving rain forests will have been leveled by the year 2031.

- With global pesticide use increasing from virtually nothing only fifty years ago to 4.7 billion tons a year, at least 6 people are poisoned by pesticides somewhere in the world every minute and an estimated 220,000 die annually.

That an environmental crisis is undercutting our food-producing resources and threatening our health is no myth; but myths and half truths confound our grasp of the root causes of the crisis and, therefore, our ability to move toward solutions. In many parts of the world, once productive lands are now desolate. But claiming that population pressure and overgrazing cause spreading deserts is no more useful than saying that a person whose throat had been slit died from a lack of blood. That may describe what happened, but it hardly helps us understand why. Similar descriptive but not explanatory approaches confuse us as to the necessity of pesticides in feeding the hungry and to the reasons behind the felling of rain forests. They block us from seeing that a trade-off between our

environment and the world's need for food is not inevitable. Alternatives do exist, and no doubt many more are possible. Indeed, environmentally sound alternatives can be even more productive than environmentally destructive ones. In our next chapter, we explore these possibilities.

Making a Desert

Over hundreds of years, many of the farmers and pastoralists in West Africa's Sahelian region and much of the continent's other semiarid areas fashioned an interactive mix of food crops, trees, and livestock. For the most part, the system maintained soil fertility and protected the land from wind and water erosion. Its diversity helped ensure some harvests even in years of poor rainfall, which were common. In the late nineteenth century, by contrast, occupying colonial powers viewed the land as a mine from which to extract wealth. In West Africa, colonial administrations imposed on local farmers monocultures of annual crops for export, notably peanuts for cooking oil and livestock feed and cotton for French and British textile mills. But growing the same crops year after year on the same land, without any mixing or rotation of crops, trees, and livestock, rapidly ruined the soils. Just two successive years of peanuts robbed the soil in Senegal of almost a third of its organic matter. Rapidly depleting soils drove farmers to push export crops onto even more vulnerable lands. Geologically old sediments, well suited for grazing grasses or tree crops but too delicate to withstand hoeing, were torn up for continuous planting. Ever less land was left fallow.

Especially in East and Southern Africa, Europeans seized the fertile and well-watered lands for themselves---even the legendary Livingstone's trek through Africa was in part a search for the best land for cotton. By relocating and confining Africans to areas least suitable for farming, the Europeans made localized overpopulation inevitable. Thus, even when the population living off the land was but a fraction of today's, food-producing resources in sub-Saharan Africa were rapidly being destroyed. With formal independence (in the early 1960s for most European colonies), the pattern only intensified. To generate foreign exchange to finance "modern" lifestyles for a new urban elite and launch industrial investments, postcolonial African governments exerted pressure to produce more, not less. Falling export prices in the late 1970s and early 1980s put pressure on governments to make up in volume what they were losing in value. And farmers themselves, receiving meager and falling prices for what they grew, had to produce even more just to meet their food and cash needs.

Due to the soil and climate characteristics of most of the continent, herd grazing is the most sustainable way to produce food in many regions of Africa. But the spread of export crops, by crowding livestock herders into ever smaller areas, has contributed to overgrazing. Government restrictions on herders' traditional practice of migrating in response to rainfall patterns have often compounded the problem. The drive to intensify livestock production on ranches or replace herd grazing with row-crop agriculture, jeopardizes the traditional ecological balance in animal-herder-land relations.

Since early colonial times pastoralists have been

steadily displaced to more fragile, and lands, as good lands have been acquired by the wealthy for profit-making operations. By the early 1980s the and regions of sub-Saharan Africa were home to 51 percent of the region's cattle, 57 percent of its sheep, and 65 percent of its goats. According to two experts, "Explanations as to why pastoralism and poverty are now so highly correlated in Africa are that pastoralism has been more and more restricted to areas that otherwise could not support any human economy, much less a materially prosperous one."

It is unclear to what extent deserts are still expanding in Africa today. Careful studies of the dynamics of grasslands used by African pastoralists over a number of years have found that the vegetation suffers during periodic droughts but recovers thereafter. Thus, while lands previously brought into intensive crop or ranch-style production continue to degrade, there is little evidence that remaining pastoralists, are desertifying new areas.

It is true that the desertification that occurred in Africa in the past and the continued degradation of ranch and cropland have human made origins. Yet the underlying explanation hardly has to do with feeding increasing numbers of hungry African people.

Reclaiming a Desert

Machakos, Kenya, is a semiarid region that in the 1930s was seen as a classic example of desertification driven by a growing human population (although population density at the time was a paltry thirty-four persons per square kilometer).¹³ In 1937 a colonial observer commented that Machakos was:

"... an appalling example of a large area of land which has been subjected to uncoordinated and practically uncontrolled development by natives whose multiplication and the increase of whose stock have been permitted, free from the checks of war and largely from those of disease, under benevolent British rule. Every phase of misuse of land is vividly and poignantly displayed. ... The inhabitants are rapidly drifting into a state of hopeless and miserable poverty and their land to a parching desert of rocks, stones and sand."

Yet time proved this diagnosis of the problem to be wrong. We can now say with some certainty that Machakos was severely underpopulated. Marginal soils can often be made productive through terracing, small-scale irrigation, intensive rotation of crops and livestock, and the incorporation of organic matter into the soil. But all of that requires labor, far more than is available in many areas of Africa (the population density of sub-Saharan Africa in 1995, for example, was 24 per square kilometer, compared to 108 in Asia). As the population of Machakos increased over time, so did the quality of the soil, as local people constructed terraces, planted trees and hedgerows, developed integrated crop-livestock systems, and constructed water catchment systems to capture scarce moisture and divert it to their crops.

Today Machakos is a green and relatively prosperous area with a population density of 110 people per square kilometer and a complex and beautiful terracing system reminiscent of small-farmer rice areas in East Asia. Soil erosion has been brought almost completely under control. Per capita production of corn, a key food crop, has risen from 350 kilos per person per year in 1950 to more than 1,200 kilos in 1990.

In this case, population growth, environmental recovery, and increased food production went hand in hand, Machakos shows vividly just how wrong the myth of food versus the environment can be. If it proves to be a good

indication, history may eventually tell us that wider problems of land degradation and low productivity in African agriculture were largely a product of low population densities.

Soil Destruction at Home

Bringing our focus back to the United States should be enough to dispel the notion that population pressure is the root cause of soil erosion. In fact, North America is now the continent with the most severe desertification problem. Since widespread farming began in the United States in the eighteenth century, an estimated 30 percent of total farmland has been abandoned because of erosion, salinization, and waterlogging.¹⁴ Fully one-third of the topsoil in the United States has been lost. Today about 90 percent of U.S. cropland is losing soil faster than it can rebuild, and over half of U.S. pastureland is overgrazed and subject to high rates of erosion. Just as in the third world, the dramatic expansion of row crops for export in the early 1970s—primarily corn and soybeans—greatly accelerated soil losses. In the first three years of the export boom, soil erosion in the Corn Belt leapt 39 percent. As erosion continued unabated into the 1980s, national alarm mounted and conservation measures were incorporated into the 1985 Farm Bill legislation. This was a positive turn, without question. However, it was small compared to the bias of the U.S. agricultural system against resource-conserving production methods. The 1996 Farm Bill, for example, continues to favor economic concerns over conservation. The emphasis is on "flexibility," leaving the enormous task of changing current trends in pesticide use and land degradation up to individual growers and the laws of the marketplace.

Wholesale Destruction of Rain Forests

Rain forests cover but 7 percent of the planet yet contain 50 percent of the world's species of plants and animals. They are the lungs of the world, consuming the excess carbon dioxide produced by our industries; they are sources of foods and pharmaceuticals ranging from chocolate, cashews, bananas, and brazil nuts to cortisone and quinine; they are beautiful; and they are in great danger.

During this century forests in the tropical third world have declined by nearly half.²⁴ Each year about half a million square kilometers are destroyed worldwide.²⁵ Many things can intervene in the process of deforestation, so predictions of future destruction are always tenuous; nevertheless, if current tendencies were to prevail, the outlook for remaining forests would be bleak indeed:

- Rain forest loss is most rapid in Asia, where total disappearance would take only ten years at current rates.
- In the Americas, where the greatest reserves are found, it would take twenty-one years.
- In Africa, with the most limited reserves yet the lowest rate of destruction, it would take thirty-six years.

Rain forest destruction in Brazil has long been very severe. In the most developed state, Sao Paulo, only 3 percent of the former forests remain. In the cerrado, an open, savannalike forest formation, more than 60 million hectares have been cleared to make way for soybeans and pasture. Of Brazil's Atlantic rain forests, less than 10 percent remain. All of these speak to an extraordinary pulse of forest loss during the last two decades.

Deforestation destroys the homes of and poses a genocidal threat to millions of indigenous forest peoples.³⁰ It also leads to massive soil erosion, exacerbating floods and silting rivers. What lies behind such ominous devastation? Is it growing numbers of people in search of land to grow food? Evidence from around the world strongly suggests

otherwise.

The Amazon River Basin

Every day during the 1980s, as many as thirty buses and flatbed trucks carrying poor Brazilian families arrived in the Rondônia region of the Amazon River basin. Like hundreds of thousands before them, these desperately impoverished farmworkers came in search of land. They cut down and burned areas of forest, planted crops, and then moved on after a few years when the soil was exhausted, only to start the cycle again. Some commentators were quick to point at Brazil's large and rapidly growing population as the explanation for the influx of settlers. They failed to ask why settlers were forced into an area where eking out a living from the land is so difficult. In fact, the colonists were driven into Rondonia by the expansion of soybeans in Paraná, Santa Catarina, and Mato Grosso. The soy boom in Brazil is largely for export and has been driven by European demand for animal feed. Only a small fraction is used to produce cooking oil for Brazilian consumption.

Of the settlers in Rondonia, more than 60 percent failed to successfully start a new life, eventually moving to urban slums or tin and gold mines elsewhere in the region.³² During the 1990s their former plots have been bought up by cattle ranchers. Increasingly, large-scale, mechanized soybean growers have also encroached on Rondônia's forest frontier.³³ In the late 1990s the dynamic of forest destruction has been driven by a combination of cattle ranching, increasing soybean acreage, and commercial logging.³⁴

Certainly Brazil should have enough land for all, since its ratio of cropland to people is more generous than even that of most Latin American countries. Landless Brazilians are forced to clear new areas not because of insufficient land elsewhere in Brazil but because relatively few own most of that rich resource. Since 1985 the number of small farms has sharply decreased from just over 3 million to under 1 million, as the expansion of ranches, soybeans, and other forces have driven small farmers off their land. Brazil's largest farm units are growing in total area. The country's largest holdings, of 1,000 hectares or more, comprise only 1.6 percent of all farms but 53.2 percent of all agricultural land. The largest seventy-five farms, with 100,000 hectares or more, control over five times the combined total area of all small farms. Further aggravating the problem is the pervasive use of prime agricultural lands for pasture and the high proportion of idle land among the country's largest land holdings. Overall, 42.6 percent of agricultural land is not cultivated, and among Brazil's largest land holdings (of 1,000 hectares or more) 88.7 percent of arable land is left permanently idle.

For decades, wealthy land moguls have fiercely resisted pressures for more equitable distribution of land. From 1985 to 1996 there were 969 assassinations of peasants squatting on lands belonging to large landowners.⁴⁰ Yet during that time Brazilian courts convicted only five people of crimes associated with violence against the landless.

In 1994 then minister of the economy and renowned sociologist Fernando Henrique Cardoso promised economic stabilization and land reform if Brazil would elect him president. Since taking office on January 1, 1995, President Cardoso's record has been greatly tarnished by the glacially slow pace of reform; the brutal assassinations of landless rural families at Corumbiara, Rondônia, and Eldorado dos Carajós; and the continued impunity of those responsible for the violence against those who struggle for land reform. During the first two years of Cardoso's term in office, at least eighty-six rural workers, family members, and landless activists were killed, most by the military police.

The astounding concentration of land ownership in Brazil has left 4.8 million rural families completely landless,⁴³ not to mention millions of impoverished families who abandoned the countryside for the infamous urban favelas out of economic desperation. Moreover, as the mechanization of large soybean farms spreads through

the country, farmworkers lose their jobs. So ever more landless workers must compete for ever fewer jobs.

While deforestation is frequently blamed on small farmers, in fact, large-scale forest conversion for ranching and increasingly for soybeans is far more widespread. In one of the few studies that actually compared large- vs. small-scale clearing (in the neighboring Bolivian Amazon), 80 percent of the clearing was carried out by large holders.⁴⁴ The forest is, by and large, not being cleared to feed the hungry.

Central America

Most of the tropical rain forest cover in Central America has been either entirely removed for different kinds of agriculture and cattle ranching, or subjected to unsustainable logging and similar practices. In their book *Breakfast of Biodiversity*, ecologists John Vandermeer and Ivette Perfecto describe a complex "web of causality" that explains the loss of these forests. Key elements in the web are transnational banana companies that are leading the drive to put more land into export plantations and logging companies, which, even when they do not clear-cut, still open roads into new areas. Added to that are small farmers displaced by export agriculture and banana workers laid off during dips in the boom-and-bust cycle of the global banana market who follow those roads in search of new lands to homestead. On their heels may come cattle ranchers turning forest and small farm plots into permanent pasture. Also part of the web are international financial institutions and the U.S. government, which pressure local governments to increase export earnings for debt service and Northern consumers with their insatiable appetites for bananas and tropical hardwoods.

Slashing and Burning the Tropics

In 1997 and 1998 newspapers were filled with stories of choking smoke throughout Southeast Asia, generated by forest fires raging out of control in Indonesia.⁴⁶ According to the *New York Times*: "The smoke from forest fires was everywhere, an unimaginable cloud that stings the eyes and tightens the chest, like the plume from a campfire except that it has blotted out the sun across hundreds of thousands of square miles in Southeast Asia and left the region with the ambiance of an ashtray. During the same period weather satellites recorded an increase of more than 50 percent in the number of fires in the Brazilian Amazonia. A thick belt of smoke swathed the entire basin. In an analysis thick with racist overtones, the *New York Times* complained that "Asia's filth is becoming increasingly cosmopolitan... not only sully their own countries but creating environmental catastrophes that cross international boundaries and create a burden for the entire planet." Though the *Times* article mentioned loggers in passing, it strongly suggested that small farmers clearing plots for planting were the prime culprits. One photo caption read, "Purwadi, an Indonesian farmer, in the ruins of the forest he burned down to start his farm. 'There's no other way of clearing the land,' he said. 'I have got to plant my chilies.'" To drive home the point, the author then pointed out that "Asia's population is dense and growing rapidly."

What were the real causes of these environmental

catastrophes in Indonesia and Brazil⁷ According to UCLA tropical forest expert Dr. Susanna Hecht, it was the combination of a harsh dry season caused by the El Nifio climate phenomenon, together with clear-cut logging in Indonesia and selective logging in Brazil, which left an enormous quantity of "slash," highly flammable tinder, on the ground."

So drought and logging created the basic conditions. What actually caused the Indonesian fires to start? According to Canada's Globe and Mail, "Forest and scrubland has been given to large industrial conglomerates wanting to invest in timber estates and oil-palm and rubber plantations. To clear their holdings ... plantation companies are allowed to set 'controlled fires,' as long as other methods like bulldozing are not feasible. The government says this burning should be a last resort ... but most companies use this as a first resort. It is the cheapest method."

An investigation by Mother Jones magazine found that satellite data had pinpointed 176 logging and plantation concessions where fires were deliberately set to clear land. "Though the Indonesian government has historically blamed peasants for setting forest fires, officials have been forced to admit that corporations are the main culprits. In September [1997], Indonesia's minister of the environment, Sarwono Kusumaatmadja, released a long list of companies responsible for the fires," wrote the author.⁵ According to the Center for Environment, Technology and Development in Malaysia, only 10-20 percent of the fires were caused by small farmers. According to the Environmental Defense Fund, most of the fires in Brazil were started by cattle ranchers burning old pasture near forest edges. Growing more food for increased numbers of people in the tropics does not generate this demand for lumber and beef, or the plywood, rubber, and palm oil produced by forest plantations in Indonesia. It comes from Northern countries. The United States imports about \$1.5 billion worth of beef and \$200 billion worth of forestry products per year.⁵⁶ In 1996 the United States imported over \$400 million worth of lumber, \$900 million worth of rubber and latex, and \$78 million worth of palm oil from Indonesia. Japan and Europe are also to blame.

Logging, ranching, and tree plantations in the tropics represent the kind of development that redistributes wealth upward. The benefits provided by the forests-biological diversity, water catchments, soils, rivers, fertile land for gardening under forest-fallow systems, as well as energy sources for labor-intensive local industries-are available to all, including even the poorest with no market power. But commercial plantations, logging, and ranching, liquidate such benefits in favor of those accruing mainly to existing elites and to affluent groups, largely foreign interests. Permanent, broadly distributed benefits are exchanged for temporary, highly concentrated ones. The whole process reflects the grossly unequal distribution of power, nationally and internationally.

These dynamics of destruction are extremely important, but in Brazil at least, the worst may be yet to come. Presently on the drawing boards are massive infrastructure construction programs to link up Brazil's center and west with shipping lanes on the Amazon, the development of a Pacific corridor to connect the western Amazon with Asian markets, and the expansion of the export corridor from Manaus to Caracas. These megaprojects presage a massive boom in oil and mineral mining, timber and fish exports, and continued soybean expansion. The investment is being carried out largely with private capital and thus is less vulnerable to political pressure for the compensation of those in the path of these projects. While indigenous populations are organizing to resist these threats to their homelands, governments,

mining companies, and businessmen remain committed to megadevelopment in Amazonia.

Pesticides and Our Food Security

Now let's turn to the third area of concern raised in this chapter: the threat to health and the environment from pesticides. We too once wondered whether people's legitimate food needs would not require using ever more pesticides. Already over 4 billion pounds of pesticides are used annually throughout the world. In the United States alone, nearly 2 billion pounds of pesticides are injected each year into our environment-that's over 7 pounds for every American, and the amount is increasing.⁶⁰ In California, which consumes 25 percent of all U.S. pesticides, use rose 31 percent between 1991 and 1995.⁶¹ Lest anyone think that less toxic products are being used, the use of known carcinogens increased by 129 percent during the same period. Nationwide the rate of increase in total pesticide use for agriculture shot up dramatically in the mid-1990s. Worldwide, pesticides now add \$25.5 billion to farmers' costs annually, while the human health toll is even more staggering. Estimates of pesticide poisonings in the third world are as high as 25 million people yearly.⁶⁻¹ In the United States some 300,000 farmworkers suffer pesticide-related illnesses each year, and in California as many as one thousand pesticide poisonings have been registered per year. A national survey by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found that 10.4 percent of community water wells are contaminated with at least one of 127 different pesticides. The most harmful chemicals end up in the third world. Many of the pesticides that U.S. corporations export are banned, heavily restricted, or have never been registered for use here. Most end up in fields where workers are not provided protective clothing and where safety precautions are the last concern of the farms' owners. On cotton and banana plantations in the Philippines, the Ivory Coast, and Central America, we found pesticides being indiscriminately sprayed from airplanes and from canisters strapped to the backs of unprotected workers. In a survey conducted in Central America we found that when they apply pesticides, 64 percent of farmers and farmworkers use no gloves, 62 percent use no boots, 72 percent no overalls, 60 percent no hat, 55 percent no respirator, and 64 percent not even a long-sleeved shirt. A schoolteacher in Trinidad told us that each time the sugarcane plantations have been aerially sprayed, most of the children in her classes stay home sick the next day. They have fainting spells, vomit, and suffer bad skin rashes.

For the last fifty years, export plantations in Malaysia have depended on the cheap labor provided by women. More than thirty thousand women are temporarily employed today to spray pesticides. The great majority of them are badly paid and work unprotected. Exposure to paraquat and other highly toxic pesticides produces severe skin irritation and affects their reproductive health. Many Central American export crops such as melons, strawberries, and broccoli come originally from temperate climates; when brought to the tropics they suffer more severe pest problems than do native plants. In the tropics these imported crops also suffer greater pest attack than they do in the temperate zone, as the lack of winter makes for favorable pest conditions year-round. To make matters worse, crops that are exported fresh have to meet the cosmetic standards of Northern consumers, leading to more pesticide use to avoid blemishes. In a survey we found that from 28 to 56 percent of the melon farmers

we interviewed had been poisoned by pesticides during the previous two years, depending on the country. Increasingly, transnational chemical companies have moved the manufacture of the most hazardous pesticides to the third world, where plant safety regulations are less stringent. The lethal combination of deadly ingredients and deficient safety precautions was dramatically demonstrated by the 1984 leak at the Union Carbide pesticide plant in Bhopal, India, that killed more than 2,000 people and injured 200,000.⁷⁴

While pesticides most endanger exposed factory workers and farmworkers, today everyone is at risk. "The weight of evidence is clear," says Dr. Charles Benbrook, former director of the National Academy of Sciences' agricultural board, "exposure to pesticides is a cause of cancer."

Beyond causing cancer, new evidence suggests that pesticides may have many other dangerous effects. For example, many pesticides fall into a category of chemicals called "endocrine disrupters," some of which directly affect the reproductive system. The most frightening part is that this occurs at dosages much smaller than those at which we used to think pesticide residues were dangerous. It may soon be proven that pesticides have played a significant role in the alarming rates of increase in breast, testicular, and prostate cancer over the last fifty years, as well as in apparently declining human sperm counts and serious disruptions of ovarian function in women. Becoming aware of the mounting use of pesticides, involving both immediate harm and untold future hazards, we had to ask ourselves if pesticide use is really essential to the world's food security. In assessing this complex question, we had to struggle to fix the following facts in our minds—they run so counter to what is widely assumed about the necessity of and benefits from pesticides:

- About 25 percent of the pesticides in the United States are used not in agriculture at all but on golf courses, parks, and lawns and in homes, schools, and other buildings.
- Despite a tenfold increase in the amounts and toxicity of pesticides since their commercial introduction in the late 1940s, crop losses to insects have nearly doubled.
- Less than 0.1 percent of the pesticides applied to crops actually reaches target pests. The rest moves into ecosystems, contaminating the land, water, and air.
- U.S. farmers could cut pesticide use by as much as 35 to 50 percent with no effect on crop yields, simply by using chemicals only when significant pest numbers are present.
- For corn and wheat, together accounting for 30 percent of all pesticides used on U.S. cropland,⁸¹ researchers estimate that crop losses from pests would increase only 1 or 2 percent if no pesticides at all were employed.

Much of the problem with the use of pesticides is cultural: the cosmetic standards set by consumer preferences in industrial countries (especially in the United States) have driven producers all over the world into a never-ending search for the glossiest apple and most unblemished pear. In the United States it is estimated that from 60 to 80 percent of the pesticide applied to oranges and 40-60 percent of that applied to tomatoes is used only to improve appearance, with no improvement whatsoever of nutritional content. The prevalence of form over content in our modern culture is something we will have to overturn if we are ever to become more ecological and less wasteful. What these facts brought home to us is that much of the threat from pesticides is not related to food production at all and therefore a large portion of pesticides currently used on food crops could be eliminated without a significant drop in production.

And what about the third world? Do pesticides there help

produce food for hungry people?

In much of the third world the bulk of pesticides are not used to grow the staple crops of the poor but are applied to export crops. In West Africa, in the mid-1980s the figure was over 90 percent.⁸⁴ In Latin America, "entrepreneurial farmers"—who grow most of the export crops—use 77 percent, while small farmers use only 11 percent. It is not surprising that pesticides are concentrated on export crops not staple foods. First, food producers are often the poorest farmers and simply cannot afford the cost. Second, monocultural export-crop operations are much more vulnerable to pests than smaller-scale mixed-crop farms. Third, since pesticides must be imported in most third world countries, they are likely to be used on crops that earn the foreign exchange needed to pay for such imports.

The Pesticide Treadmill

The striking increase in pesticide use worldwide—the dollar value of pesticides in world trade rose by 39 percent between 1990 and 1995—results in part because pesticides lock farmers onto an accelerating treadmill.

The case of cotton in Central America is illustrative.

At the end of World War II the small countries of the region planted fewer than 20,000 hectares of cotton between them. But driven by growing demand in the United States and other Northern countries, the area grew exponentially over subsequent decades, peaking at almost 463,000 hectares in the late 1970s. The cotton boom displaced tens of thousands of small-scale food producers from their land and ignited more than a decade of social unrest and violence in the region. This rapid expansion was facilitated early on by new synthetic pesticides used to control cotton pests. But those same chemicals soon became the downfall of an industry. Key pests like the boll weevil became resistant to the chemicals as a result of repeated exposure, forcing growers to continually increase dosages and frequency of spraying, as well as to buy ever more expensive products as they hit the market. Whereas growers only sprayed a few times in the early years, in the mid-1960s they were spraying ten times per season; by the end of the decade that had doubled.

Instead of fewer pests, they faced more: Insect species that had previously been under natural population control by other insects that preyed on them, were released from control as the chemicals wiped out their natural enemies. The number of sprays continued to grow, in some years reaching more than forty, and pesticide costs to farmers skyrocketed, eventually reaching more than 50 percent of the cost of production. That made cotton unprofitable, and the cotton boom was soon followed by the cotton bust, with the number of hectares planted in the region plunging to fewer than 100,000 in the 1990s. In trips to former cotton-growing regions during the 1990s, we have witnessed abandoned, wasted, and eroded soils depleted by decades of cotton monoculture, and once prosperous commercial centers reduced to ghost towns, the banks and stores boarded over and tumbleweed blowing down central thoroughfares.

The cotton boom-and-bust cycle, which was driven by pesticide use, fed nobody; in fact, the boom increased hunger by driving the poor off their lands, and the bust dragged down the entire economy of the region. In its wake, economic ruin and environmental devastation were left.

A Mounting Response to Environmental Destruction

Since we began our work in the early 1970s, we have witnessed the rise worldwide of increasingly vocal and effective citizen organizations challenging the environmental destruction we have discussed in this chapter.

India. The Chipko ("hug the tree") Movement in the Uttarakhand region of the Indian Himalayas is perhaps the best example of a truly grassroots initiative to block forest destruction by outside interests. The movement started in 1973, when Mandal villagers came together to prevent the felling of a forest by a large company, as women placed their bodies in the way of loggers. The practice has spread successfully in a dozen other protests throughout the region, and the Chipkos have inspired other movements in India and abroad. Not only did they halt deforestation near their communities, but they also won reforestation programs from a reluctant government. Dozens of other grassroots movements in India are actively fighting to stop deforestation, megadam projects with forced relocation of villages, and the establishment of polluting industries.

Brazil. The *seringueiros* or rubber-tappers movement in the state of Acre in the Brazilian Amazonia is another example of a grassroots challenge to environmental degradation and the social injustice that inevitably goes with it. From 1976 to 1988 they confronted rich cattle ranchers forty-five times, preventing the destruction of over 1 million hectares of forest. The assassination in 1988 of their leader, Francisco "Chico" Mendes, was condemned around the world, and the Brazilian government responded with the elaboration of the first national environmental policy, the creation of a Brazilian environmental protection agency, and the delimitation of several "extractive reserves," where forest protection will permit a sustainable livelihood for some rubber tappers. Today the movement continues to engage in struggle over much larger and more important areas of forest with great implications for the future of both rubber tappers and indigenous forest peoples.

United States. The Californians for Pesticide Reform (CPR) coalition brings together more than sixty public interest organizations committed to protecting public health and the environment from the proliferation of pesticides. They are seeking a drastic reduction of pesticide use in California, which would set an example for many agriculturists around the world who assiduously follow developments in California agriculture.

Hard Questions

Surely there are areas where population density exacerbates environmental destruction, yet most of the damage is not even caused by food production. A superficial diagnosis that blames the growing number of people (who often are victims themselves) leads us nowhere. Even where environmental destruction is severe, would cutting the population in half solve the problem? We must dig for root causes, asking, Why are peasants denied productive agricultural land and forced onto lands that should not be farmed, or resettled in rain forests? Why are big operators allowed and even publicly subsidized to tear down tropical forests? If desertified areas are helped to regenerate, who will control the process, who will benefit, and who will lose? Why do most of the farmers who use chemical fertilizers and pesticides think they cannot afford the risk of shifting to less chemical-intensive methods? Why are environmentally sound alternatives for food production little known and even suppressed rather than fostered? And finally, can humanity afford to treat food and the resources to produce it just like any other commodity? Hard questions like these must be confronted if we are serious about protecting and even enhancing for future generations our planet's finite food-producing resources, as well as an environment safe for all life. While we have a long way to go in developing our answers and no one answer will fit every place and people—we hope this book helps clear our vision so that the right questions can be raised.

from **WORLD HUNGER TWELVE MYTHS**

The Institute for Food and Development Policy
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TRACKING THE LIBERAL FROM LEFT TO RIGHT AN AMERICAN TRADITION:

LARRY LIVERMORE -by Tommy S.

Punk planet #22 ... "and those who know me will testify that I've spent most of my life trying to avoid work of any kind"-LL

If you've been spending your valuable leisure time paying attention to what passed as 'punk rock' in the 1990's you surely have heard of the label Lookout Records and it's 'founder' Larry Livermore. Without going into the gossip, inner workings of that whole mostly middle class music realm, nor the boring details of what punk rock is, was and sells, I will just give some background.

I worked at an indie distributor that took on Lookout Records in the late 80's. The label had about 10 titles of bay area punk rock. Soon two young kids, Pat and Chris, took over basic operations as Larry was usually busy/off somewhere up north and then later traveling to Europe constantly. He had not worked a straight job since the 70's and somehow had capital to start a small label. The co-founder, David Hayes, left Lookout in the early in the game in the late 80's disgusted with Larry. We sold their records—the label had some hits—most notably Operation Ivy and Green Day, both of which sold hundreds of thousands of copies from 90 to 94. Green Day sold over a million copies of their two titles on Lookout after their signing to Warner Brothers in 94. Quite a windfall if you realize that a small indie label with low overhead is making at least \$2 per CD sold gross profit, after manufacturing costs. The workers at the label—by 96 run by a small group of 9 to 5 worktime industrious people—bought out Larry Livermore around 98 to get rid of him... the cost was at least a million dollars. Even in the late 90's the two big bands, Green Day and Operation Ivy were still selling 40 to 50 thousand copies a year. A Ramones derivative band, Screeching Weasel, was selling 40 to 80 thousands copies of back catalog yearly from 1992 on. So with the luck of signing three big bands, (the other 200 titles sold from 1 thousand to 40 thousand copies) Larry Livermore is now considered by parts of the mainstream press and by a large segment of the young pseudo-underground 'indie' scene as an important voice. He wrote a column for Maximum RocknRoll (readership 10 to 15 thousand) through the early 90's and for at least 4 years has been writing for Punk Planet, a somewhat 'leftist' zine with a readership of 9 to 12 thousand. He did his own zine in the late 80s called Lookout that contained many very humanitarian internationalist views and realistic observations about capital's drive to profit at the expense of the planet and its inhabitants.

I am not writing this because of some infantile possession of what punk rock meant to me in 79 to 84; i.e. the new version is its anti-thesis of twenty years ago. I am not doing this because he made at least \$2 million from CD/record sales of 'punk rock'. If a small business makes a lot of money, I don't care. I care about the actions of the ruling class. But also as important, I see as our enemies, those 'journalists' (and educators and pundits) that perpetuate ruling class dogma. Those that leave huge gaps in the US government's history in order to continue distortions and allow the continuation of injustice, war for corporate profit/control, those that consciously pursue anti-intellectual discourse, that spout patriotic propaganda, in order to sup-

port the power of a few over many many millions. As Chomsky has repeated many times, the system has to be analyzed in order to combat it. And one way to recognize its suppression of dissent and even just as clearly, its suppression of the historical record, is to see how people change or color their views to fit into the established institutions of thought and thus reside safely within the corporate parameters of discussion. Propaganda is so all-pervasive and all encompassing in the US, that I hold little anger for the worker that repeats lies to me. I save the anger for the so-called educated people that have influential venues to use it, to parrot the deceptions.

What is really interesting about Larry Livermore is that we can see in print a transition from left-liberal to right.

Here are some 'left' quotes from his magazine Lookout from 1989

"The right to vote, we are told from childhood, distinguishes us from the less fortunate totalitarian states of the world. But of what value is the right to vote if our choice is limited to candidates pre-selected by the same sort of power brokers who run nearly every state, totalitarian or "free." ...and "The most valuable legacy of our brief history is the notion of democratic rule, despite its current sorry state. The idea that human beings are born with inalienable rights rather than having them granted by some benevolent king did not originate with the Declaration of Independence,..." and "Because we are a rebellious people, and, one should not forget, a heavily armed one, revolution is almost inevitable if the government continues on its current course. The economic and environmental disasters resulting from present policies will eventually become intolerable."

Sounds like a man that is very sympathetic to injustice and the role the people in instituting real democracy. Or someone you could hope to offer a semblance of rational opinion in the years ahead. But this is the liberal, the American fence-sitter—those of fragile temporary convictions who can leap from support of bottom up democracy to begrudging qualification of dictatorship. This change is often cited by the American Liberal as becoming mature. When your pulse starts to beat the blood of the bile of the captains and commanders of class war ships, the dirty unwashed masses become a threat. Larry Livermore has spent the past five years in his Punk Planet columns trying to beat back the clawing, snapping sharks. I'll get to that, but first watch the drift.

I will begin as he talks about growing up in Detroit in Punk Planet #20...

"And there was nothing remotely like the constant fear of drive-by shootings and random unprovoked violence that makes our modern urban ghettos a nightmare for residents and visitors alike." in the late 50's and early 60's....wandering the black neighborhoods of Detroit "In fact, the reason my friends and I liked to go down there was because it was such a lively and friendly community. On summer nights there would be people everywhere, handing out on porches and apartment steps, listening to music, carrying on, and having a great old time, quite unlike the rather sterile and stultifying climate of the all-white districts."

Actually, as a typical 'where-did-the-good-times-go' Lake Wobegone liberal, he is completely wrong. Detroit was a violent urban area through the 50's and 60's. The murder rate there was at least 40 percent higher than the present in California urban areas. This happened up through the 1970's. (1) Using this 'good times' picture to illustrate the present uncivil urban times is also interesting in that he doesn't say what 'black neighborhoods' he found so nice and pleasant. Was it the Arden Park or Boston -Edison area or the north-

west area of 12th street, and Russell Woods wherein the few black middle class families were allowed to move? Or was it the lower eastside, where the black work force had been completely segregated by political control and over 150 neighborhood 'associations' working since the 40's through legal and illegal means to isolate...a working class area that already by the late 50's was suffering. Technological innovation and a move to cheaper labor markets took away a large portion of the living wage jobs from the mid 50's to the 60's. Automation was a devastating force. Employment in the Rouge plant fell from 85,000 in 45 to only 30,000 in 1960. To make it more clear, there were over 330,000 manufacturing jobs in 1947 in Detroit and only 180,000 by 1972. By 1957 over 9.9 million square feet of factory space was idle in Detroit. 148 building permits were issued in 1951. In 1963 only 14. As usual, blacks were the last to be hired, and the first to be fired during our country's boom and bust periods of this century. 15 to 20 percent unemployment for blacks by 1960, only 5 percent for whites. And blacks for the most part, were only offered from the beginning of the 40's boom the lowest paying jobs and rarely allowed to advance. 2/3's of the housing in Paradise Valley (The East Side) was classified as sub-standard by the Feds in the 40's. Also known as the 'rat belt', 206 bites were reported in 51 and 52.

But what is also important here is that the specter of crime and incivility is popping up. A theme that every liberal uses to justify a turn right. I can't come up with many records of white adults strolling down city streets getting shot in a 'drive-by' (they typically involve latino and black youth in urban areas- a segment of the population not of concern to the liberal except as an 'underclass' to be incarcerated), but I can come up with hundreds of white women being killed by white men in their homes, white children being killed by parentsjust in the bay area alone in the last decade. Still, I would agree with him if he had left out the word 'modern', since violent crime in American urban areas has always been higher than any other western 'democracy', but NOW at it lowest rate since the 1960's, Larry's good old days. And in Punk Planet #20 also "...because beginning then, in the mid to late 60's, crime of all kinds, from petty theft to rape and murder, began increasing drastically. " Yes, but up to when? He implies it has risen since then, but crime has dropped below mid-60's levels, even though our poverty rate is much higher- which ignores the past 100 years of trends; perhaps Latino and black poor are less violent than white poor since color makes up the majority of the poor now? I could make a case for that with stats.

One issue later...the shit really starts to get deep.....Larry Livermore has already advocated voting for Clinton, ignoring JFK's, LBJ's, and Carter's record assuring readers it was the only thing to do. And most perniciously he began taking on a supremely snobbish elitist attitude—already sounding like a polar opposite of everything he had written in his zine 4- 6 years earlier. PP#21 In an answer to a letter that criticized a previous column "To use "corporations" as an all-purpose synonym of "bad" is juvenile in the extreme. A corporation is simply a means of economic organization. It is neither good nor bad intrinsically: the character of its owners and of their actions is what matters."

This is typical right wing obfuscation. The writer was talking about corporations that exploit people and corrupt democracy. This is the general usage of the word. The general connotation understood by all people is that corporations are a huge economic entity that is controlled only by the profit motive. Hardly 'juvenile' to use the accepted connotation of a word. But certainly 'juvenile' to avoid the whole argument as

he does, to dodge the realities of market control by playing word games.

"CEO salaries are often outrageously high and ordinary working people's salaries often are far too low." (Often?). "However, more was done to mitigate this situation by labor unions, minimum wage laws, and tax policies than all the punks and Noam Chomsky combined. It wasn't until the radicals began to completely abandon mainstream politics that reactionaries like Reagan were able to drastically reverse the gains made by working people since the 1930's."

There is no proof whatsoever that some mythical left has leaped in and out of the two-party presidential elections. (see my 'nader' letter to AVA in this issue) However, there is a veritable mountain of evidence in the form of books and magazines of the past 150 years that describe progressive gains as being FORCED onto the two party system. Not by voting for one of the two. FDR was not a left wing liberal. He was responding to the times. He himself stated in an interview that he feared a revolution if modest reforms were not enacted. He took the idea of Social Security from Upton Sinclair's socialist platform, and then helped defeat him in the California election for governor. With idea of the ballot box realizing our gains, we would have to ignore massive strikes through the 30's, a 40 year battle for the 40 hour week, even though politicians mouthed support, and that the entire civil rights movement had as its main basis, a show of force to make the government enforce laws. Even Larry's mythical liberal hero, JFK, tabled the civil rights act for LBJ to sign since he feared loss of southern Democrats' support. The list is really endless. He also doesn't mention that members of unions often striking against the wishes of the conservative leadership of the AFL, were massacred many times by the order of both Democrats and Republicans alike.

The basic point is, that radicals have very seldom been involved in 'mainstream' politics in this country. They organized masses of people to force the hand of the ruling class to enact progressive laws.

"The streets and schools of Detroit were already in ruins long before the regressive tax policies and welfare cutbacks of recent years. It's my opinion that social alienation exacerbated by race-based identity politics contributed greatly to this decline."

In just six years he has fallen to the right side of the fence with the tired Buckley/Limbaugh phrase 'identity politics.' A phrase he doesn't bother to define. Amazing that in Lookout zine in 1990 he said :

(Detroit) "The color of their skin is relevant only insofar as it makes it even easier for prosperous whites to overlook the devastation that lies in the wake of their journey toward the American dream. Even many well-intentioned liberals fail to grasp that what is a work here in Detroit, and dozens of other American cities like it, is a system of apartheid is some ways more pernicious than that practiced in South Africa. Nearly all the wealth is controlled by whites from outside the city. The mayor and most of the city council are black, but they function almost entirely as employees of suburban industrialist. Five-term mayor Coleman Young provides as especially vivid example. While his political appeal consists largely of his ability to communicate..... Young has devoted most of his career to looting Detroit's meager financial resources and delivering the lion's share of them to a handful of white multimillionaires.

"But because racism is not merely a bugaboo, because it is so pervasive and entrenched on both sides of the color line, I do not

see a great deal of hope. What is happening in Detroit is a regional problem, but as long as the poverty and crime can be walled off behind artificial city corridors, suburban whites can blithely go about their business pretending that the cancer devouring the center of this once-great metropolis has nothing to do with them: sooner or later the rage and despair that envelops Detroit will no longer be containable. The specter of all-out race war is no longer as far-fetched as it might have once seemed. And that is the real tragedy, because the true issue here is not racial at all, but economic. Race has become a useful device to divide the haves from the have-nots, and in the process it made it nearly impossible for people to find common ground, to stand together and ask, "What have they done to our land? What have they done to our humanity?" (that as 1990)

But now, it is 'identity politics'. This is the American Liberal becoming mature. Now denying basic economic facts. That Black unemployment rose from 20%(1960's) to 40% (1970's) in Detroit in a ten year period is no longer an issue. Devastation of the biggest industrial center of the Midwest can be attributed to some phenomena as 'identity politics.' And not to a systematic enforcing of segregation in jobs and housing nor the loss of 200,000 manufacturing jobs by the late 60's.

"This Clinton argument is getting extremely old. Politics is the art of the possible and Clinton is what is possible. Ralph Nader and Ron Daniels are not. Only a tiny minority of the people are willing to vote for them. Unless you want to do away with the basic principles of democracy, you must deal with what the majority votes for. I have never said I agree with all of Clinton's policies in fact Mr. S.A.B.O.T. and I probably see things much the same way regarding Clinton's environmental policies and at least some of his welfare reforms. Mr. S.A.B.O.T.'s scheme of things is, to put it rather mildly, irrelevant. I doubt he could muster more than a couple dozen fellow zealots to throw up a picket line now and again; for someone to affect social policy in a country the size of the USA he or she must be able to inspire and motivate hundreds of millions of people. That does not involve being a "messiah," it means mastering the arts of politics and leadership. Until you are willing to the hard work that entails, you will remain children playing at rebellion, whose net effect of history and the lives of those who need you will remain less than zero."

We who know the historical record know that it IS possible and wholly necessary to organize outside of the two-party system. As we know, no progressive reforms have been enacted by some humanitarian in Congress. They have always responded to outside pressure. His typical liberal assertion of needing leaders, as if they 'move people' is completely non-factual also. The people have always been in movement long before a leader comes along, who is usually appointed by the corporate media since they can't comprehend, nor can the liberals, people organizing on their own in truly democratic action. Though I don't think LL is a fascist, yet, this view of democracy has some parallel:

Adolf Hitler in Mein Kampf

"This system (that of the social democrats) is opposed by the true Germanic democracy of the free choice of a leader with the latter's obligation to take over fully all responsibility for what he does or does not do. There will be no voting by a majority on single questions, but only the decision of the individual who backs it with his life and all he has." Then, "...that no unworthy climber or moral shirker can come in the back way to rule his fellow citizens, but that the greatness of the position to be assumed will discourage incompetents and weaklings." And "But should, nevertheless, such a fellow try to sneak in, then he will be easily found out and ruthlessly rebuffed: Out with you, cowardly wretch! Step back, you are soiling the steps; the

front stairs leading to the Pantheon of History is not for sneaks but for heroes!"

His views of democracy don't match even dictionary definitions, and certainly not historical origins of its progressions from Greece to the US and France in the 1700's. To him, it means a reliance on leaders to lead millions and create social policy. Most would call that dictatorship at the least.

So off you 'few zealots' and don't soil the steps!

The 'hard work' has never entailed following a leader, but organizing bottom up against massive American government oppression. Interesting as side notes, he does not say what part of Clinton's gutting of social services he DOES agree with, and then that a citizen's letter to the magazine was 'irrelevant', though Larry's views are not in any way supported by history. And remember only a minority even vote in presidential elections. 60% of the population does not vote. We could ~~principle of democracy originally stated as the basis~~ the late 80's. Such as a free discussion of views, equal time for candidates, with a free mass mediaand mass democratic organizations

And still more in issue #21 "But for some reason, white radicals like to maintain this vision of black people as revolutionary Mau-Maus, ready at any moment to rise up and overthrow civilization. I think they see them as the shock troops of the revolution, and that's why they get so upset when a black person gets a good education, begins speaking standard English, joins the middle class and moves to the suburbs, sometimes even, heaven forbid, becomes a political conservative. ...a self-righteous white "anti-racist" is there to declare that he's "lost his blackness." I've recently come to realize that most of what passes for racial conflict these days is not racial at all, but cultural."

The imagery of black radicals being 'revolutionary Mau-Maus' can only be construed as racist, though he plays the imagery off as a mantra of the 'white radicals' —that I have never seen in my life. Nor have I read anything in socialist, anarchist or communist literature that claims such a small percentage of the population is going to rise up and overthrow civilization. The rampaging from the jungle imagery it connotes is disgusting. And now, racial conflict does not exist according to LL! It's a cultural problem. Has he been reading Sowell or Murray? It sure sounds like he is ready to place blacks into a "self-victimizing underclass" as we hear from the rightwing.

"Only a few unreconstructed Cro-Magnons still hate people based simply on the color of their skins."

Now I need a drink. If you abandon this article now, I can understand, because it only gets worse.....to claim only a few people are racist in the USA is not only to deny the everyday reality of millions of people, but even in a perverse twist, Larry Livermore at this point is not even supported by the mainstream press- he is going so far right.

But if you want to go on, you can be tortured by the baseless analogy to the Irish immigrants.....

"A century ago, Irish immigrants were widely thought of as lazy, dishonest, prone to crime and drunkenness. Now Irish-Americans (though few really think of them as anything but American anymore) run universities, corporations, and governments. They did it by getting good educations, by hard work, by integrating themselves into the mainstream of American life. To suggest that black people can't accomplish the same thing is idiotic, even though they obviously have a harder row to hoe because of being more obviously different."

The racism against the Irish only lasted for a couple of decades in the 1880's. By 1890 hundreds of Irish were in power positions in the church, and held local offices all across the

country. They were also active in unions immediately ALL of which barred blacks until the 1930's except for the IWW, WFM, socialist unions and others not allied with the AFL. Irish people were not shot for voting, and were allowed to mix into urban housing. Don't forget the many blacks killed by Irish in NYC in a race riot.-with no one prosecuted. Mass murder against blacks was a common occurrence from the mid 1870's up to the 1930's. Weekly lynchings still occurred all through the 1940's. To compare any ethnic white groups (Irish, Slavs, Italians) to the experience of black Americans is outright fraudulence. Insulting and a profoundly immature re-write of history. (2).... To compare 20 or 30 years of scattered racism against an English speaking white skinned group of workers to the experience of millions of dark skinned slaves forced to migrate, forced to exist somehow under 300 years of slavery and then battered another 100 years with indiscriminate murder, rape, torture and injustice and denial of basic rights, is an outrageous racist reach of logic. Why the magazine, Punk Planet still let him print columns after this I cannot understand. But still he appears every issue.

"But nobody is doing them any favors ...by suggesting that ghetto English is just as good as standard English by applying different, more tolerant standards of scholarship to half-baked theories of Afrocentrism by taking seriously charlatans and dingbats like Jesse Jackson or Spike Lee. But because he (black Mayor of San Francisco, Willie Brown), he is able, any time his systematic selling out of San Francisco is questioned, to cry "Racist" at his accusers. And an amazing number of people, both black and white buy it."

What the hell is he talking about? What reality plane is he on? Since when do black students not get tested on standard English? When has Willie Brown cried 'racist'? He is known all around as the real estate corporate whore. It took him 5 million dollars, and both corporate daily papers, to win the race against Ammann's grass roots campaign (funds: \$200,000). An amazing number of people? Turnout was still below 50%. Less than 20% of San Francisco has ever voted for Willie Brown!! And this idea that multi-cultural studies are rampant on campuses is garbage also. I wish they were required, but it's not true- this IS the most multi-cultural society (3). I spent 16 years in state schools and heard nothing of the real history of blacks, Italians, Chinese, Latinos, Irish etc... Afrocentrism? That's the right's catchword for studying the black American experience often with a history of Africa before the arrival of the Portuguese, British and all. The litany of oppression is disgusting, terrifying but ultimately extremely fascinating and helps us to understand modern power structures better. I think black American history should be required for all white Americans.

"I've spent my whole life underground, burrowing through subcultures and countercultures with hardly a thought for what went on above the surface, and now I seem to be emerging into the light, anxious to take my place in the larger scheme of things...."

AHHHH, he is emerging into the light! Anxious to take his place! Maybe he can get a column in the New Republic! Or Buckley's National Review! His whole life burrowing through subcultures! From the 70's through the 80's he was living up in the woods. As his columns prove, he has no concept of anything but basic middle-class California rebellion and even not a historically correct or multi-cultural view of the 60's though he often writes about that era as an expert since he took acid and lived in Berkeley. He's never burrowed, only poked his head in, decided on his moralistic slant, and left. We can hope he will leave again soon.

"Having left what could have been a lifetime career in the music business, do I just sit about and watch the world go by, or am I meant

to find some other work to carry on with? Much of what I have learned and believed over the last half of the twentieth century has turned out to be wrong...and "

Admitting his acceptance of corporate doctrine. Propaganda is so effective in the USA that people brainwash themselves on their own accord!

More Facts on the Young Black Man from Larry Livermore!

Punk Planet #22 "That is the reason why, after unquestioningly supporting affirmative action for 20 years or more, I finally came to the realization that it's a bad idea. ...because it hurts the people it's supposed to help. It ... rewards those who choose not to do their very best, which may seem like a small thing, but it isn't. Think about a young black man who's really good at school, who can get A's and B's without trying too hard. If he knows that, thanks to affirmative action, a solid B+ average is going to him into any college he chooses...isn't he less likely to make that extra effort that would earn him straight A's? That young man might, with just a bit more work, have developed into a genius, if instead, he coasts into a college scholarship based on skin color, black people lose out on what he might have accomplished..."

..... something really foul has crawled up this man's ass and up his...Mad cow disease!! Spongy brain! He goes to England all the time! I'm sorry now for being so mean to someone that is really mentally retarded.(3.5).

But I must point out that hardly anyone, can get in any college they want! It takes money first, college expenses have gone up 40% to 200% depending on state, since LL went to school. Admissions looks at everything from alumni letters (one estimate is that 20% get in on that alone-see "Myths...), extra curricula activities and prep courses (two areas vastly underfunded in urban schools who get only 1/4 funding that white suburban schools do) . Interesting to note that a month after this column was printed, there was a headline in the SF Chronicle/Ex, that since UC Berkley had to drop affirmative action, 100 black and Latino students with straight A's and high SAT's did not get admitted in one year.

"The same process is at work when we tolerate self-destructive or anti-social or criminal behavior on the basis of race. Even worse that excusing it is glorifying it, and that's precisely what a lot of rap and hip-hop does..... thatby refusing to learn standard english, young black men are somehow striking a blow for freedom. In reality, they're setting themselves up for a quick trip to the penitentiary or the graveyard. White radicals have a vested interest in maintaining a large and dangerous black underclass. They'd never admit it , hell, they might never even realize it, but in their fantasies the revolution is still coming "...and somehow it's going to be led by a black population in which illiteracy, drug addiction and violence are endemic ."

Criminal behavior is tolerated much less when committed by blacks, hence their higher incarceration and arrest rates. It is accepted fact that blacks and whites do the same amount of drugs. Why then if blacks only make up 12% of the population, do they make up at least 30% of the drug war prison population? They didn't use standard English with the judge I guess. Maybe the white guys got tutors beforehand. Also, it is fact that under mandatory sentencing (something up to the district attorney -whether to plea down or not), whites get it 20% of the time while blacks get it 60%...of youths with no priors. (4)

Facts have never entered LL's world. Here is his often-later-repeated view of the 'black underclass'. A racist right wing construct. White people commit just as much violent crime if sepa-

rated by income level. Adolf would be proud of this too, and the threat that you are going to get a quick trip to the penitentiary or the graveyard (!) if you don't mend your ways and speak standard English! Precisely this liberal and right moralistic crap that has put 2 million people in prison—the highest per capita rate of anywhere in the world.

On Checking Out a Dance Club (PP #23)

"See affirmative action at work, when the black guy stands there sort of swaying and nodding his head in a vague imitation of some Soul Train rerun and you just know he's thinking, "Damn, I'm good, I'm so good, I don't even need to try to dance. Because I'm black, I am dancing."

Oh ok.

Can you believe I have spent days, and days, maybe weeks collecting this shit and writing about it for you?

Can we request obligatory butane lighters with our Punk Planet subscriptions? Burn out his column before you even THINK of reading it.....

PP #28 Poor Millionaire

"It's not unusual for poor and working class people to become rich," (what?-yeoooo!)..." but you can almost always tell them apart from people who were born that way. There's a certain insecurity, an edginess, that comes from remembering what it's like to have no money and fearing you might end up that way again. Right now I've got more money than I ever had in my life. Some of you might call me rich, though upper-middle class would be more accurate. Yet I'm still scared I'll end up working at McDonald's or sleeping in an alley. It's irrational, I know, but that doesn't make the feeling any less real."

Kinda hard for me to believe that fear. He hasn't worked a straight job in at least 30 years yearinyearout.

PP#30, 31 His Youth

"Near the end of the summer I was 17 my father found out about it and confiscated the gun, and a month later I left home and moved away. I didn't get another gun, and eventually drugs and sex replaced gang-banging as my main interest in life."

"In my dreams I was a tough guy, but that..."

PP#32 Damns the Violence of the "Anti-social 'Underclass'" but Wants to Kill You!

"More than 20 years later I'm still bemused and bewildered by anger. It's not that I don't understand why anger exists-hell, you can't walk out your door, let alone turn on the TV or look at a newspaper without finding dozens of reasons to be infuriated. The question is: what do you do with it? Suppose that for one day you could walk through life feeling free to say exactly what you wanted to kill every asshole who crossed your path. Of course in order to do that, you'd also have to suppose that no one was carrying a gun or a knife, that even if people were twice as big as you and had fists the size of your head, they wouldn't use them, that they were guaranteed not to strike back with anything more potent than words.

"...You see what I'm getting at? In a perfect world, most of us would probably choose not to put up with most of us. Yeah, it's great to love your fellow man, but not necessarily at close quarters."

Don't spread your anti-social psychosis our way!

"If you think about it, what's surprising is not that murder and rape and assault are so common, but that they're (relatively) rare. Many people, manage to go through their entire lives without ever

being physically attacked, which, considering the way many people behave, is nothing short of astounding.”

Because we actually like other people, want to build communities, want to learn about their experiences....not kill them, or throw them in prison. Such a violent person can morally pontificate on people in poverty....and debase hip-hop and rap because ‘it glorifies violence’!!!!

“Most of the time, though, I’ll keep it deep inside, and suddenly find myself thinking that I’d like to smash somebody’s face in just.....”

PP# 33 He Made Millions by Marketing Music to Them, and now they get his disgust...”Shoot you down!”

“...but in mid-June a convention of “anarchists” celebrated its conclusion by trashing the center of town and striking temporary terror into the hearts of the soft-hearted (some might say soft-headed) liberals who make up much of the local population. Before I go further, I should declare an interest: I am no fan of Eugene, Oregon. If the same bunch of pseudo - anarchists started busting up my town, I would urge the police to shoot them down in the street, pausing for a bit of ritual torture if time permitted. But in this case I could almost sympathize: if any place deserves to be infested with pea-brained radicals who think they’re being frightfully clever to throw rocks at the local bank and fast food outlets, it’s got to be Eugene.

I had come to see the “feral packs” of young people that the newspapers complained were infesting the Mall, and I was not disappointed. There were two main groups of them, divided by fashion: on one block were the punks, on another the hippies. The punks were a bit subdued-it was from their midst that the murderer had just been plucked-but the hippies were in full effect. A dozen or so of them sprawled around, passing joints and 40s, while a few of them hassled passersby for spare change. A naked baby, presumably related to one or more of the hippies, crawled unnoticed across the pavement, headed for a nearby street. I thought to myself, as I often do in such circumstances, “Three thousand years of Western civilization, eh?”

PP #35 Pass the Facts Please...Larry....

“But I’m a moderate, I’m pretty sure Mumia murdered that cop, “ (no other comment on the case!)

PP#37 The History of the 60s and 70s!

“It was on that feeling that Ronald Reagan and Margret Thatcher rode to power. While punks, radicals and various millenarians reveled in the prospect of ever-mounting chaos, most people were frustrated and scared, ready to hand their futures over to anyone who promised to re-introduce an element of stability and security into public life.....Reagan and Thatcher were the almost inevitable result of the ’70s. There was a political vacuum-what was left of the ’60s protest movement had splintered into ever tinier factions, some of which were genuine nutcases like Weatherman or the SLA, and more mainstream liberals were in full retreat, reduced to supporting the likes of Jimmy Carter-and there was a palpable sense that the left had proven itself completely incapable of leading or governing.”

We would all like to know when the ‘left’ ever governed either the UK or the USA.

“Unfortunately, as old institutions fell away, they were not replaced by new, more healthy ones. Instead, there was a general rebellion against institutions of any kind, an almost anarchistic sense that if anything could be remotely connected to “the system,” it needed to be disregarded or destroyed.”

What ‘old institutions’ fell away by the leftists’ hand? While the Right unleashed itself. The government continued violent terror against other countries’ attempts at democracy unabated (Nicaragua, El Salvador, East Timor, and on...). The drug war was dreamed up by Nixon, specifically with intent to get “the blacks”. Social welfare programs began to get cut and attacked by the right in the late 70’s. Certainly there is no instance of the ‘left’ trying to take apart anything, but rather to build more democracy, increase labor rights and community housing. There were thousands of more strikes in the 70’s than the 60’s, but maybe this is destroying the system. I’m confused little retarded spongy brain man.

“I know the feeling. Like many veterans of the hippie era, I spent much of the ’70s moaning over the fact that it wasn’t the ’60s anymore. What I didn’t understand then was that the ’70s, in all its bloated awfulness, were the logical result of the illogical ’60s.”

The 60’s was illogical! Latinos, Blacks, Gays, Women did not wait for the leader to lead them, hence these radicals demanding more democracy and rights should have found better things to do. Dial up your local leader. They tried to change things for the better by their own power. And all of us want to go back to the closed, conformist, sexist, more racist, intellectual stifling society of the 50’s? Illogical yes, then is the beautiful and important legacy of SNCC, the UFW, CORE, the proliferation of non-mainstream news sources that had not been seen since the 1930s, and continues up to this day.

“Whether you’re talking about the social revolution of the hippies or the political revolution of the New Left, there was a self-destructive dichotomy from the start.Since some of you will undoubtedly ask, I was probably a bit of both. So was the whole movement, for that matter. Its biggest problem was that it wasn’t equipped to deal with reality outside of its own private and incestuous universe.”

Trying to stop the mass bombing of civilians in South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos was part of the mass demonstrations’ of the late 60’s “private and incestuous universe” we can assume from LL.

“If the ’60s represented America’s hyperactive adolescence, the ’70s marked its awkward transition into young adulthood, tempered by the awful realization that mommy and daddy weren’t going to pay our way anymore.” Whooooa....this is amazing! He can denigrate millions of activists working for better lives for us and characterize them as being little children playing at radical until mommy and daddy say no.

“The dwindling number of leftists veered off into ever more quixotic directions, mostly involving mindless terrorism or equally mindless identity politics. The right wing saw its chance and took it.”

The left, mostly involved in mindless terrorism! And that spook ‘identity politics’ still undefined!

HULKING YOUNG MEN HOGGING SEATS ALLOWS THE RIGHT WING TO RULE! BEGGING AND SLEEPING ON THE STREETS CAUSED PROP 21!

“Today’s minuscule leftist movement loves to blame all our recent ills on the clampdown of the Reagan and Thatcher eras, but America and Britain’s rightward drift can be just as easily blamed on the failure of the left. And it wasn’t just a political failure; more importantly, it was a cultural one. The enormous increase in anti-social behavior-everything from violent

crime to vandalism and littering to begging and sleeping on the streets to hulking young men refusing to offer their seats on the bus to crippled old ladies-played right into the hands of reactionary, "law and order" politicians."

"But while the left would have you believe that such behavior is an understandable reaction to a failing economy and institutional racism, that's only part of the story..... The guy who a few years earlier would have been considered a selfish, destructive, anti-social asshole could now excuse his behavior by saying, 'I'm just doing my own thing, man.'"

"I was reminded of that attitude on a recent visit to California. The issue du jour was a ballot proposition that sought to crack down on juvenile crime by locking young offenders in adult prisons. It was a poorly thought out proposition, idiotic, even, and most of my radical friends were practically apoplectic about it. "Don't criminalize the youth," was their rallying cry." "But they seemed to be missing an important point. First off, the proposition didn't "criminalize" young people, it offered a new, harsher way of dealing with young people who had criminalized themselves by, um, committing crimes. While it was right to oppose Proposition 21 for being inflexible and vengeful, what none of the radicals were offering was a more constructive, more humane way of dealing with the very real problem of juvenile crime."

"It's hard to believe that there was once a time when leftism and socialism and anarchism were about proposing new solutions, new ways of organizing society. In recent years they've been primarily about saying "No" to anything that deviates even slightly from their time-honored catechism."

Much needed answer at this point: Socialism and anarchism's basic tendencies, bents, directions social and economic philosophies have changed little since the 1930's. Then the phrase Leninist-Marxist became very important and is still used widely this day to denote authoritarian Marxism, such as that that leads to the totalitarianism (and mass murder) of Stalin. And to counter the usual right's notion that these are 'outdated' philosophies, let's remember that the basic ideas of capitalists or those who believe that capitalist democracy is the end of social progression have changed even less than ours in 150 years. Capitalist economists of type quoted in the mainstream press (besides William Greider of the Rolling Stone-an excellent writer) still to this day quote people from the 1800's, reiterate general 200 year old laws of supply and demand or that a free market economy exists, when in fact no such thing has for at least 150 years, and completely ignore the very real day-to-day realities of modern capitalism wherein huge monopolies, vertically integrated markets and huge government subsidies support one company over another have near total control. To look at the last half of the 20th century's turn to completely mobile finance and global capital and then talk about 'entrepreneurs' or free market individualism is even more absurd than me quoting Marx. Capitalism hadn't even really matured until the early 1900's, when artisans were completely replaced by mass production. Keynesian capitalism was a reaction against a powerful and un-ignorable demand by the people of the western democracies. That being a minor variant. My point is that anarchism and libertarian socialism and anarchist syndicalism has been right all along. The market does not provide democracy or humanitarian living standards. Mass movements of workers/people have forced the capitalist democracies to provide what we have.

In response to Larry's assertion that 'we' only say 'no' to everything now. I can only say that yes, as in the past, we say no to war, subversion of democracy, famine, homelessness, hierarchies in our organizations that can lead to authoritarianism, and corporate control of the media. To recover from history what he is trying to blot out, that is, the progressive action and organization from the 60's to now would take more than 100 pages. But if you only get your information from George Will columns, or the NY Times on worldwide resistance, on the US's historical record, we can expect him to lay the lives of millions onto the compost of irrelevant history. As he does with childlike stilted perfect grammar. Also should remind us all what the word catechism means: a series of formal questions and answers used as a test. In LL's columns there are no questions to the populace, no allowance for answers, only lockup of answers by him the leader and seer, and thus to the intellectual Bastille for the rest of us.

For his infantile concealment of Prop 21's actual substance, Let me just reprint Alexander Cockburn:

It's revealing how much LL off handed throws a quip out without even discussing this major crime bill. It will literally mean that thousands of more teenagers go into federal prisons. And he made all his money selling music to 'punks', angry kids.

Cockburn wrote in the Nation March 13, 00-before Prop 21 passed

"Today in California a person under 18 can be prosecuted in adult courts through a process known as judicial waiver. There's a fitness hearing, and a judge decides whether the youthful offender should go to juvenile court or be tried as an adult. Prop 21 takes this power out of the judge's hands and gives it to the prosecutor, who has first and final say on the matter.

So let's suppose 14-year-old Albert B tags a bus. Under existing law he would have to commit \$50,000 worth of damage to qualify for a felony charge. Prop 21 lowers the threshold to \$400. Under present law Albert could be supervised on informal or formal probation, either at home or in a juvenile hall, group home or camp. He could receive a variety of prevention, intervention, supervision and detention services. Under this system, more than two-thirds of teenagers put on informal probation never get arrested again, precisely the result Prop 21 is designed to obliterate. By its provisions, informal probation will be more or less eliminated. A minor will have to appear in court or before a court representative before he can be released. So, after his tagging, Albert B could be doing a year in jail for felony defacement of property, with the offense permanently on file. Current law seals the record of youths for violent or serious offenses. The record can't be opened for at least six years. Not any more, if Prop 21 goes through. The new law would prohibit forever the sealing of records for some offenses when a minor is 14 or older. It would also require the Justice Department to report the complete criminal record of any youthful felon. Albert's past will be set to catch up with him for the rest of his life. Let him try to go back to school, get a loan, get a job.

Gangs? Oh yes, Prop 21 recognizes the perennial ripeness of the G-word as a means to criminalize the next generation of blacks, Latinos and other minority groups. Prop 21 loosens the definition of what it means to be a gang member. Under present law, prosecutors have to prove that a gang member devotes all or substantial amounts of his time to gang activity. Under Prop 21, all the cops will have to do is establish "active participation."

The new law would add the crime of conspiracy to the list of gang-related offenses, so members, perhaps Albert B, could be prosecuted even if they were not directly involved in a gang's illegal

activities. There would be mandatory registration of gang members, allowing unrelenting scrutiny and control by the state (i.e., expanded wiretapping), with Albert standing the risk of being put away for "failing to register." And, yes, the death penalty is tucked in there, as a possible sanction for a "gang related" killing. —Cockburn

I would like to add, that according to admissions in LL's columns, he would have been up for mandatory federal prison time in his youth under our current laws. If he got caught—but white boys didn't then and don't now near the rates others do. Police don't sweep white suburban neighborhoods. As an aside about this gang identification bullshit let me add from C. Parenti's *Lockdown America*: A police department in a southern CA town had listed gang members of a local high school. It turned out that the number matched the total number of Latino students enrolled! The last thing we should do is ever 'trust' cops or district attorneys in identifying 'gang members'.

He continues in the same column

"Yes, they'll have occasional victories, even if those "victories" involve little more than playing speed bump to the right wing juggernaut. Yes, they'll probably succeed in stopping Proposition 21 (6), and yes, they inconvenienced the WTO for a day or two in Seattle. But if they don't come up with a better, more humane way of reducing crime, there will be more propositions, perhaps even more extreme, and some of them will win. If they don't come up with a reality-based method for managing the challenges and crises of globalization, corporations will be able to say, "Who are you going to listen to, a bunch of hippies and anarchists, or the companies who make society run and create jobs for you?" I think you know how the public will answer that one. If you really want to change the world, it means changing yourself as well, and that involves a lot of long, hard work, work which is a lot less glamorous than marching in the streets (though marching is sometimes necessary). It means educating yourself, and not just by regurgitating the rhetoric of your favorite crust band or '60s throwbacks like Noam Chomsky."

UHHHH, a better more humane way of reducing crime? How about housing; drug treatment on demand, and decent jobs. His backhand-unsubstantiated comment about, 'not offering alternatives' is so grotesquely childish blindfolded I won't go too far. Crime rates go up and down with the employment rate. Educate yourself 50 some year old, don't work, don't research sponge brain. And, as Amnesty International reports over and over, our prisons are inhumane themselves. But Larry would have to ignore the thousands of 'leftists' that are trying to better their lot. And who are the people going to listen to, he asks, the companies who make society run? The companies do, not the workers....managers, technicians, service sector data people all? And the companies make society run? How far right is he going here.....?

"It also means learning about politics and economics and culture from a variety of viewpoints. It never ceases to amaze me how supposedly open-minded people won't even look at an argument that deviates from what they think they already "know."

Absurd to write this, after he has attacked 'identity politics' -with no definition, direct democratic organizing, and called Chomsky a throwback-of course without refuting anything he has EVER written. Because he couldn't. He has had twenty years of leisure time to read something besides high school textbooks (and may have at one time considering his columns in the late 80s *Lookout* magazine though since he has seen the 'light') but now he reduces his objectives to belittling and obliterating decades of struggle, and though I hope not, working on influencing ten thousand readers to ignore the past. Note that in years of columns I have sifted through here, he mentions not one text,

or one reference, not one historical action, not one concise milestone. Every column is all blurry gray rumination under sweeps of numb carpeting to obscure the real world. It is much easier to tow typical mainstream doctrine, and denounce from a pedestal. Any landmark event in the past 40 years, or even 100 years, dissected and analyzed would undermine his whole arrogant belittling grasp for answers in leadership and damn his distrust of the masses.

"But on a more positive note, we're also left with the best of two worlds: the prosperity of the 1950s and '60s (without which there never would have been the leisure time to pursue social change and personal development) combined with revolutionary new technology that allows people to send new ideas caroming around the world in seconds, a process that in the past might have taken decades or centuries."

Well he is rich. So he doesn't realize that 60% of the people in the USA are not making as much as they did in the 60s, poverty rate is higher, that people are more in debt than ever, that we have millions of homeless and will have million more in the coming recession, even moreso because of his Clinton gutting welfare. And people with very little leisure time made much more progressive advances in the 1900s, 1910s, 1920, 1930s and then the 1940s. Ideas did not take decades to travel in the past.

LARRY IN THE CHATROOM

"THE MISSION IS A SHITHOLE!"

From some newsgroup alt.punk (3/98 and 4/98)

LL: "Breaks my heart, man. The free food isn't good enough for the poor fucking bums. Funny how millions of us vegetarians can get by year after year never eating meat, and these supposedly poor and homeless people feel like they're being oppressed by not getting their daily ration of dead animals. But actually, that's not my experience; here in Berkeley, there's always a long line of takes for Food Not Bombs vegetarian food. Of course most of them are middle class brats who ran away from mommy and daddy to be punks or hippies for a couple years before rejoining the rat trace, but what the hell, for the time being they qualify as poor and homeless, so they're welcome to eat freeAs for anyone who's really dying for fried flesh, there's always plenty of jobs available at McDonalds"

"Then of course there's ever-so-hip block or 16th street, which apart from being a good place for slumming suburbanites to cop heroin and needles, serves as liberal SF's theme park-style re-creation of the Third World

"Tex" answers "I smell a bit of racism in this remark Larry."

LL: "You suggested I was being racist for criticizing that neighborhood. I think Lali did a fine job of answering that inanity: It's a shithole, regardless of the color or ethnicity of the people who are making it that way. And Lali is right, it's more a class issue than a race issue; my problem is that fuzzy-headed suburban (yes whine all you want, but Alameda is a suburb) do-gooders such as yourself romanticize anti-social behavior as somehow being noble or at least acceptable when people of color practice it."

-Larry has NOT lived in an urban area since the 70s' unless you consider college area Berkeley 'urban' or Humboldt County in the 70's and 80s—he only visits—he even was afraid when my job, his distributor moved to 18th and Folsom —afraid to park there in the daylight. He

uses again and again the typical right wing tactic of turning a discussion about society's job and housing market racism away from the point and into an argument that 'we' excuse peoples' criminal activity. Second step is to turn around and say the 'radicals' are racist since we are inferring that black people are weaker, can't pull themselves up by the bootstraps, and need special help. No, actually we are saying poor people of all colors need decent housing, jobs, and healthcare. That society has to become more equal. And that the racism in this society is still very prevalent and that the effects of the documented segregation of housing and jobs in the years since the Civil war up to the present created conditions that have not been fixed, touched, or discussed in any real economic or social terms.

And the Mission District of SF a shithole? The sixty thousand people living here will tell you, don't come here. We love our neighborhood and hope we can hold onto its beauty. It has been the most ethnically diverse urban area for 100 years. The poorer areas of any city anywhere always have our society's ills more obvious and upfront.

Tex: "America abolished slavery in 1865 and replaced it with a feudal system of tenant farming. Any school boy knows that.."

Larry "Actually it was 1863, but why quibble. I suggest you learn a bit more about both feudalism and American history before making such statements. Just for starters, the Jim Crow system of racial segregation wasn't put into place until a couple decades after the war; for the first 20 years or so, much of the South was controlled by freed slaves."

So wrong it hurts....1863's the Emancipation Proclamation did not free all slaves. Absurd to imply that Lincoln's signing could somehow free slaves in half of the country that he was still at war with. Slavery continued in the south up until the end of the civil war in 1865. It also proclaimed freedom ONLY for the states that were at war with the Union, so it specifically excluded areas under Union control: 450,000 slaves in Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland and Missouri and 275,000 in Union-occupied Tennessee. That Blacks controlled the south for 20 years, or benefited by Reconstruction over whites, is a racist lie built up by Southern historians led by Professors John Burgess and William Dunning, who in the first part of the century were allowed to re-write textbooks (this is under the extremely racist Wilson administration). This version of reconstruction actually existed in high school texts up well into the 60's. Larry probably hasn't read any factual history since so we can excuse him. This job of re-writing history was meant to fire up southern whites' racism even more by building the lie about the manufactured injustices they were put through after the civil war. Around this time Birth of a Nation was made and even shown in the Wilson white house.(7)

There was a short five-year window in the south wherein the conquering northern armies set-up governments in the south, barred confederate supporters from holding some offices and sent troops to protect freedmen. White racists will say that the Homestead Act and confiscation of plantations gave all the land to blacks, and through mismanagement and laziness, they lost it. The Homestead Act offered millions of acres for sale but at \$100 to \$200 for 160 acres, it was out of reach of almost all black and poor whites. The vast majority of land was bought up by northern industrialists, timber companies, and of course southern plantation owners. 100 million acres were given to the railroads free of charge. The act was repealed in 1877 anyway. By 1900 blacks owned LESS land than they had in the late 1860s. The confiscated land from 'confederate traitors' was mostly returned to the

original owners by 1877. Also by the mid 1870s, the republicans had completely retreated on any promises even to the point of letting the southern confederate democrats regain control of all the states. There was a massive repression against all blacks and specifically those who were organizers or held office. At least one tenth of the black members of the 1867-68 constitutional conventions became victims of violence during Reconstruction. By 1870 the KKK, whose members crossed all class lines, were in full force. Here are only several examples: In October 1870 a group of armed whites broke up a Republican campaigning rally at Eutaw, AL, killing four blacks and wounding fifty-four. In the same month, in Laurens County, SC, bands of whites scoured the countryside driving 150 freedmen from their homes and killing thirteen.

"Nearly every colored church and school-house" in the Tuskegee area was burned in the fall of 1870. Then there is the Colfax, LA massacre: fifty blacks were killed under a white flag of surrender. The list is too long. By the mid 1870s, most blacks could not vote, and very few were better off except that they were 'legally free.'

No party, North or South, commented Adelbert Ames, could see hundreds of its "best and most reliable workers" murdered and still "retain its vigor." And in the words of W.E.B. Du Bois "the slave went free; stood a brief moment in the sun; then moved back again toward slavery."

—still in the chatroom of 4/98.....—

Larry: "The fact that freed slaves weren't welcomed into jobs with open arms was not due simply to racial prejudice (though of course it was a factor); most of them were illiterate and unskilled, ...the ghettos as we know them didn't develop until the major influx of blacks who came north to work in the factories during the two world wars."

Ok can we get to the point where I can call him an obvious racist? What whites entering the manufacturing era of the 1900s up to the first world war were more 'skilled' and more literate than blacks? Very few and most of whom were in white-only craft unions. 2 million white immigrants entered the country and entered the northern industries from 1890 to 1910—a force that blocked out blacks, even moreso. The history of the Gompers' controlled AFL is enraging; using his union to scab, sell-out to the rich—anything to keep the 'masses' of unskilled labor, the immigrants and the blacks out. Still don't forget the absurdity of calling assembly line factory work of war industries 'skilled only' labor.

Half the blacks unionized from 1900 to 1910 were all in one mining union: the WFM, since it welcomed them. What skilled jobs there were, were exclusively reserved for whites. This is fact right up through the 1950's. The racist leadership of the AFL helped enforce white-only in skilled trades from the 1880s to the 1930s. Employers helped the AFL in doing this, knowing that blacks could then be used as scabs...which they were, but when confronted with open-armed union men at strikes, they refused to scab often.

Ghettos 'as we know them' didn't exist till then! The blacks caused them!!!! There were no slums in Chicago, Detroit, NYC, and Philly up until the first world war? This is blatantly so ignorant; in Chicago 1880 alone, the working class areas had an average of 8 people per 'dwelling'! No wonder he calls Zinn a crank; he couldn't get through all the truth in People's History of the U.S. Or perhaps he is suggesting the much more crowded and poor white-only ghettos pre WW2 were not violent and drug-ridden?

—How about to Detroit, the city he grew up in and says he knows so much about.

Blacks did not move up north in amazingly large numbers during WW1 as he implies. Many factories were still closed to them. In the north, up until WW2 blacks were confined still to service and domestic jobs. Most jobs up through the 1950's in the manufacturing sector all through the north were advertised on a race basis until it became illegal. In Detroit of 1920 out of a population of 1 million there were only 40,000 blacks (4%). By 1940 there were 150,000 (9%). By 1950 300,000 (16%). As late as 1942 119 of 197 Detroit manufacturers had no black employees! Then the war-time shortage of workers really hit and they had to hire them, as well as women. Contrary to what he implies also, ALL workers moved to the cities in vast numbers from 1930 to 1950. It created a severe housing shortage and of course blacks bore the brunt.

A mere 1,500 of the 186,000 single-family houses constructed in the metropolitan Detroit area in the 1940's were open to blacks. As late as 1951, only 1.15% of the new homes constructed in the area were available to blacks. This housing racism enforced by outright law back then (and by not letting in multi-units in neighborhoods now), redlining by banks, homeowners associations attacking black buyers (there were over 150 such groups in Detroit alone in the 1950s), 'blockbusting', and many other economic tactics over 100 years has effectively made color lines in every major city. Higher rents and housing prices were put on blacks in the neighborhoods they were allowed in. In Detroit 1947, homes unrestricted by racial covenants, cost \$8,000 to \$12,000 in 1947 while the city-wide average was \$5,500. And the jobs? Between 1941 and 1944 workers at dozens of Detroit -area plants engaged in wildcat strikes over the hiring and upgrading of black workers to jobs formerly restricted to whites. These walkouts by racist white workers happened all over the country during WW2.

Los Angeles being another sad fact of the times...also hate strikes shut-down workplaces in Chicago, Baltimore and Philadelphia. During the Detroit riot of 1942, more than ten thousand whites swept through Paradise Valley,...and police sympathized: 17 blacks were killed by police-no whites. Though the UAW is deemed one of the most radical unions, most of its white members in Detroit voted for the racist George Wallace. He won the 1972 Michigan Democratic primary, sweeping every predominantly white ward in Detroit.

Later the 'Tex' says "I would never, in a million years, say that people in poor areas of Richmond or Oakland live they way they do by choice. No one would choose to live in squalor if they had other options."

Larry: " Oh, the poor things. So they're helpless, are they? " (then a tract about how everything is equal for all).....: "Businessmen of any color, greedy or not, can not maintain a viable economy in a city where there isn't a supply of educated and skilled workers, where crime is so rampant that they cant' count on being safe in their homes or places of work....." (businessmen live in poor neighborhoods?) —Funny he brings up class, to degrade the Mission but nowhere else in his writing does class appear. Opportunist fog when it fits. So by now he fully vaulted into 'it's poor peoples' problems since they don't educate themselves". And yes really poor people are somewhat 'helpless' (when unorganized) since money gets you food, housing and education and the ability to move in search of a better job.

He farts and smells flowers. And writes it as edifying fact. We fart, smell rotten eggs, and open a goddamn window. I give up. There are ten more pages to this. But time to quit.

CONTINUED TO NEXT ISSUE with more Punk Planet columns

and some from the new reactionary Hit List magazine.

NOTES

(1) See Sugrue *The Origins of the Urban Crisis : Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*.

The white against black violence was astounding, especially considering that Detroit was the hotbed of the radical UAW. The city was completely segregated. If a black family moved across the dividing line they were pushed out with violence, hundreds of incidents are on record of effigy burnings, rock-throwing, shootings, and outright politician supported mob attacks, from the 40's to the 70's

(2) For a history of murder, repression, economic, political disenfranchisement of the past hundred years against blacks, I recommend: *Reconstruction* by Eric Foner, the many volume *Documentary History of the Negro People* by Aptheker,... W.E. B. Du Bois' *Black Reconstruction*.. for a historical version of the civil rights movement (no, not instituted top down by leaders) see *Powledge Free At Last?* For fiction, but truth, there is James Baldwin, Langston Hughes among many others. Chester Himes' books are incredible learning experiences. *Lonely Crusade* is one of the best books of the century. Also *Black Fire* auto-bio by Nelson Perry is great. *Invisible Man* by Ellison.

(3) See the *Myth of Political Correctness* for a superb academic refutation of the right's lies about 'leftists' running campuses... or that the same old standard courses are not there. Also see Loewen's *Lies My Teacher Told Me* for a review of how barren and conservative state historical texts are.

(3.5) mad cow disease, also known as bovine spongiform encephalopathy, Experts believe that the fatal disease it is caused by aberrant proteins called infectious prions, which leave the brain with spongelike holes.

(4) See C. Parenti's book *Lockdown American* among hundreds of others.... *Scapegoating Generation* and *Framing Youth*, two books by Mike Males are also excellent in their dissection of widely available crime facts versus the perpetration of media lies.

(4.5) France and US signed it-but the US in late 50's stopped the election from happening, fearing correctly that Ho Chi Min would win. The US would rather see 2 to 3 million people dead then let a left democracy exist anywhere in its world of yes, imperialism. JFK was responsible for the overthrow of a government in Guatemala and Bosch in the Dominican Republic, and directed the CIA to subvert in many other countries. Bombing of civilians in South Vietnam had already been in full force by JFK, before LBJ took over. JFK also helped set-up and train the vicious death squads of El Salvador. He was also aware that nazis were being used in torture training all over southern America as well as that Barbie, The butcher of Lyon, was in Bolivia training their police, under CIA guidance. LBJ did increase social programs drastically. But I could argue that he HAD TO considering the volatile mood of the country. Though one of his biographers did say that he really did care about blacks and citizen rights in a schizophrenic way. And keep in mind, that Nixon, actually increased some social welfare later too, in fear of the angry populace. But LBJ oversaw a fascist coup in Greece, helped Indonesia massacre an estimated 1/2 million citizens (with the CIA even providing lists to the Indonesians of 'communists'), and of course massively increased the bombing of Vietnam, including destroying food supplies for the population (a war crime) ultimately resulting in at least a million dead during his term alone. LBJ to the Greek Ambassador, "Fuck your parliament and your constitution. America is an elephant, Cyprus is a flea. Greece is a flea. If these two fellows continue itching the elephant, they may just get whacked by the elephant's trunk, whacked good....If your Prime Minister gives me talk about democracy, parliament and constitution, he, his parliament and his constitution may not last very long." Later a CIA agent was set up to head to government. My point is, I cannot find a 'left liberal' past among our presidents in fifty years.

(6) No, the kids got on the streets in force trying to educate everyone. It passed anyway because of the complete media and politician hyped fear of youth crime—crime that is nowhere near what men in their late 20's and 30's commit. And, no democrat in California came out against it. Even though Larry says it is 'wrong' later, here he seems to think it is

wrong for us to defeat Prop 21. How he makes these massive leaps I can never understand.

(7) That movie portrayed the KKK in a completely positive light and claimed that black politicians, with the army of the north, ruled the south and took all the land... for reference see DuBois, Foner, Zinn, Apoltheker... Loewen... among many others.

REPORT ON THE ITALIAN BALLOT BOX

Mario 'Spesso' El Paso Occupato

(El Paso Squat-anarchist-10 years in existence) Torino, Italy.

There are two main points to make about Italian political parties. First of all, in Italy we are assisting a slow but inexorable shift towards a model very close to the bipolar system of clear British and American style. I say they are moving towards this system because even far off from electoral rounds there is nevertheless a waning and waxing of improbable parliamentary coalitions, which from time to time divide the Centrist, the Left and the Right parties. The second point concerns voter turn out: at least one third of those entitled to vote desert the elections, and among these a further 10% invalidate their vote or leave the paper void.

The institutional political scene in Italy consists primarily of two major line-ups, one from the Left and the other from the Right, joined in by several catholic centrist parties, which have inherited the historical features of the former DC party (Christian Democracy), which led the government for over 40 years. The centrist parties, which are vaguely characterized as "leftist" or "rightists", join either the DS area (Left Democrats, born from the former PCI, the Italian Communist Party) or the Forza Italia area (the party established by the media tycoon Berlusconi, who aims at replacing the former DC party) and their allies from AN (National Alliance, former MSI, the extreme right party).

In fact, during the last 20 years, following the political and social upsets of the '70s, virtually all parties dissolved, changing their names and in many cases their leaders, all according to the same dynamics: a weakening of the ideological base (be it socialist, communist, anticommunist or religious), the adoption of a globally accepted and winning institutional and social framework (bipolarism), a 'popularization' of the political debate in order to make it more accessible to the electorate.

What has actually happened is that political parties lost their substantial differences, except for a few classical and superficial 'cornerstones'. Of course, the Right refuses all homosexual issues (but there are right-wing gay associations); of course, the left is committed to the so-called fight against corruption (but there have been major corruption scandals involving the very big 'red' cooperatives), but actually all of them simply try to find and establish their own position of power and control.

The key terms (underpinned by media campaigns, artificially created with the purpose to give politicians the opportunity of surfacing and show up) are *stability* or *governability* and *growth*.

According to these vague principles, which can be perfectly applied to any social modification, legislation and dictation, we find, for instance, right-wing politicians supporting people

squatting in large popular suburban areas around Rome and riding the tiger of the protection of employment, and left-wing politicians calling, in the name of social security, for more power for the police and the expulsion of gypsies, travelers or simply peddlers and homeless people from the towns under their local government.

This hinges on the 'events of the day' which the media present us with: the so-called 'employment emergency' or the 'drug problem', the 'baby gangs' or 'videogames', the 'pedophilia' or 'terrorism', terms which are all increasingly dropped or exploited in order to divert public attention from the endemic problems of repression, concentrating any analysis and critics of the system onto superficial issues which, in most cases, are only symptoms of a more general alienation.

Confidence in political parties in Italy is steadily declining: for instance, many people who have supported the Christian Democracy or the Communist Party for decades felt disappointed and disgusted by the transformations undergone by such parties, which are seen as an actual sell-off of national values (inspiring the Resistance during the Second World War and the making of the Republic) aimed at promoting a 'business is business' attitude.

Many people have joined newly created parties, such as the Lega Nord, a chameleon-party which asserts to be inspired by the federalist idea, but calls to mind the Poujadism; Lega Nord declares to fight against the government centralization and to favor the autonomy of the single regions (in the North), but at each election round it lines up either with the Right or with the Left, according to its daily convenience (though it does not refuse government contributions granted to all parties achieving a certain share).

The extreme parties in both line-ups (Rifondazione Comunista and Comunisti Italiani on one side, Fiamma Tricolore on the other) are a genuine joke: not only do they put together any possible political-ideological contradiction, but they are totally incapable of exerting any kind of influence from both the institutional and social points of view. Comunisti Italiani was established after an internal split-up of Rifondazione Comunista, when some member of the latter did not agree about supporting the Italian government during US bombing in Kosovo. They keep on disagreeing about whether to support the government when this takes positions contrary to their ideological dictates. Fiamma Tricolore, which considers Alleanza Nazionale as a party which sold itself, includes nostalgic fascists whose leader, who was subject to investigations concerning the fascist killings of some decades ago, from time to time has supported the armed struggle, the democratic debate, grass-roots movements, insurrectionalist movements... a thorough chameleon.

Generally politicians make only very superficial distinctions and simply adapt their views to those of their voters: while politicians from Forza Italia very much resemble a bunch of high-flying yuppies (this is actually a corporation-party, founded on the concept of selling politics as if it were just another product on sale), the left-wing parties maintain a very vague attitude towards problems which should instead bring forth their differences. This is the reason why they have obviously lost any kind of appeal. While ideologically they

cannot stand against immigration, they are most rigorous in pursuing the "zero tolerance" concept with 'those who commit criminal acts'.

For instance, here in Turin, a city historically governed by the Left, the fiercest opponents and most convinced repressors of squatters and extra-parliamentary movements are people from the Left. Besides any specific event, the Left has always been the most repressive political force as regards extreme leftists, anarchists and alleged 'terrorists' (it is enough to remind the only time in which, since 1945, tanks appeared in the streets: in 1977 in Bologna, another stronghold of the PCI, during the hottest period of student and extra-parliamentary uproar).

Briefly – and it is probably no surprise to American people, who are forerunners of this political attitude – all politicians are essentially alike: they say what voters want to hear. And in those rare circumstances in which they affirm and promise things which they intimately believe, they are either dupes (who change their minds about their own possibilities as soon as they 'make their entrance' in the button rooms) or they are figures who know perfectly well they will never be able to make their words come true.

Fewer and fewer people will attend the elections, but social control – the only real reason of existence for parties and elections – is now solely based on other internalized concepts: the belief that this is the only possible way of life and that a radical change is not possible, and the frustrating feeling that the conditions one lives in cannot be subverted by knocking down one and all dictations.

The new frontiers of technology make therefore feasible what once was only achievable by force: the totalitarian state now imposes itself beforehand by controlling who we are, where we go, who we see, what we buy through very simple devices of which we make use ourselves.

It does not make much difference whether people vote or not, and above all whom they vote for: the cage has become so large by now that we don't even see the bars. The illusion of freedom is worse than the certainty of imprisonment.

Ed note-For history on USA/CIA intervention in Italian politics post WW2 see Politics Of Heroin by McCoy and Killing Hope by Blum. The USA reinitiated fascist and Mafia control as they moved up into the continent-while fighting a war against fascists!- fearful that the resistance, mostly communist, would win in the post WW2 elections.

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A very informative indepth 30 pages or so magazine. Not always 'left' enough for me, but it is 'red' compared to mainstream press, even though it is just filled with factual articles. If your household/flat needs monthly real news, I suggest this, Z, the Covet Action Quarterly and the Anderson Valley Advertiser. Excellent interviews with people you would not hear from anywhere else.



WORLD HUNGER: TWELVE MYTHS

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Peter Rosset

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Essential for those over-population 'let 'em starve'
arguments so popular today. It's who controls the
resources and the effects of monoculture corpo-
rate farming, not numbers.

-see excerpt page 101

Rattlesnake#1-page 119

STUDY OPPRESSION ABROAD (reprinted from Harper's Magazine)

From Pentagon documents obtained by the East Timor Action Network detailing U.S. military training courses completed by Kopassus, a special forces unit of the Indonesian military responsible for widespread atrocities in the twenty-four-year military occupation of East Timor, which resulted in the death of 220,000 people. (Completely supported and mostly funded by the US-ed) Although Congress killed the training program in 1992 after a particularly gruesome Kopassus directed massacre, the Pentagon continued to train Kopassus under a different program until April 1998. (with President Clinton's knowledge-ed)

TYPE OF TRAINING

Sniper Level 11
Demolitions & Air Operations
Close Quarters Combat
Pathfinder/Aviation Operations
Special Operations Force/Air Drop Operations
Advanced Sniper Techniques
Support for VIP Protective Operations
Maritime Operations

Air Assault Leaders Course
Special Reconnaissance Training

Psychological Operations Training
Military Free Fall Training
Mortar Training
Nuclear Biological Chemical Training

DATES OF TRAINING

June 26-August 3, 1993
August 24-September 22, 1993
January 7-February 20, 1994
April 25-May 14, 1994
June 10-July 1, 1994
January 17-February 19, 1995
August 3-30, 1995
June 1-30, 1995
August 8-September 1, 1996
April 4-May 15, 1996
August 8-September 1, 1996
May 12-June 13, 1997
November 4-20, 1997
December 1-18, 1996
January 6-February 15, 1997
February 23-March 28, 1997
July 25-August 25, 1997

APT PUPILS

(from Harper's Magazine Dec 99)

From a series of two-way radio transmissions between East Timorese militia members and Kopassus, an elite, U.S.-trained Indonesian military unit, that were intercepted and translated by the International Federation for East Timor Observer Project (IFETI) in August and September. On August 30, the United Nations organized a referendum in East Timor in which the population voted overwhelmingly for independence from Indonesia. In the ensuing violence, pro-Indonesia militias killed thousands of people and drove more than 350,000 into hiding. The Indonesian government has maintained that the militias were acting independently. (1/3 of the population forced into hiding while Clinton and the media were declaring peace! AND bombing Serbia and Kosovo to halt 'ethnic cleansing' there-ed)

August 27, 1999

KOPASSUS: There is an order that you have to fulfill tonight. Tonight all Ablai [militia members in the town of Same] have to be on standby in their posts and in their houses. Nobody goes anywhere. The situation is hot everywhere. From time to time there will be a call from us, and if you're not monitoring, it's your own fault. Do you understand?

ABLAI: Yes.

KOPASSUS: You have to be ready in case we need your forces. Ablai 4

has to be responsible. We have to be on standby so that we won't get a bad mark from UNAMET [United Nations Mission in East Timor]. We can't be the first ones to start it, but if they fish for it we will fight back with a hard hand.

KOPASSUS: The war has begun; saddle your horses. Ablai 4, what is your position?

ABLAI 4: I'm in Nularan.

KOPASSUS: Please stand by. Keep the radio on constantly. Beginning tonight, no one turns their radio off, because in Dili, Los Palos, and Maliana the war has begun.

ABLAI: Only two days remain. Tell all of our friends in the field and all the components that work for us that we have to co-ordinate, integrate, and synchronize- Go to the polling places where people will be standing in line to cast their votes. Station yourselves in pairs to watch those who are voting, to observe and monitor them. On August 30 no vehicles can leave the area of Manufahi. We all have to die in Same. We have had it easy here, but now it's time to get serious. I ask you respectfully to follow through on these orders. Gather your forces at the individual places so that nothing unexpected happens. We don't want it to happen before the vote. Of course, if the opposition lights the first fire and smoke rises everywhere, then we can light our fire too and make our smoke rise.

September 1, 1999

ABLAI: I have a message from a Kopassus commander regarding the pickup of rifles in Kassa. When should that be?

KOPASSUS: Tonight. But be careful so the people of UNAMET who are watching and checking us the whole time don't find out about this at the cantonment.

KOPASSUS: Those white people [the IFET observers] should be dumped in the river.

ABLAI: If they want to leave, pull them out, kill them, and dump them in the river.

KOPASSUS: They need to be stopped. The car needs to be stopped.

ABLAI: It will be done.

KOPASSUS: If they go to Ainaro, send people to close the road there.

ABLAI: If we can't catch them through Babolul we'll catch them at the fork in the road.

AGUSTUS [militia member in Letefoho]: If they want to keep going, stop the car and let them walk.

ABLAI: If they try to pass through here today, I'll wipe them out. All of them. Nobody gets out, especially the white guys. Hold the car and let them walk.

ABLAI: I'll eat them up.

KOPASSUS: Nobody gets to go out. If they want to go to Dili, hold the car. If they want to walk, that's their business. Send the car back.

ABLAI: I'll make them stop here.

AGUSTUS: Better to send them up to Dadina [a military post], and we'll dump them in the Kara Ulu river.

PISTIL BOOKS

1013 E. Pike

Seattle, WA 98122

pistil@speakeasy.org

Reprinted from their zine Pistil Prose

editors: Amy Candiotti and Sean Carlson

RETAIL HELL excerpts from Issue 4 Fall 98

A black-clad guy wanted to know if we had a "forensic" section. "Hmmm. We have a law section and we have a medical section. Just what kind of books are you looking for?" I asked him.

"Pictures of dead people", he replied.

I pulled out "Death Scenes: A Homicide Detective's Scrapbook"

The black-clad youth already had Death

Death Scenes. I said, "Well, we have a gross surgery hook." He was thrilled and took it in a back aisle to browse for twenty minutes, then put it on hold. --ac

The "big baby" is in. This is the guy who wears diapers for fun. He asked to see the "Fetish Girls" book but \$24.99 was too much for him. Then he asked if we had anything on infantilism. "No, we don't," I said.

"Have you heard of it?" he asked the same as he did the last time he was here. "I don't want to hear about it," I said. busy stamping green Christmas trees on our all-purpose brown wrapping paper. "I just asked if you heard about it," he complained. He hopefully picked up the magazine Dirt Rag, but it was about mountain bikes, not diapers.--ac

There's an older guy who lives in the neighborhood who likes to dress up in costumes: cop, judo outfit, Superman. He also wears diapers. He asked me once if I knew of any publications for adults who wore diapers and I had to tell him I didn't. He's not like one of those "big babies." He apparently has a medical condition, not a fetish.

he came in today-Halloween- to look at the Bibles because he collects them. Then he told me a joke: "Do you know what Count Dracula's favorite drink is? Bloody Mary with real blood- Two parts vodka and one part type O. That's my type. He's not such a had guy, he just likes to neck a little."--ac

Two young women from Newfoundland were just in. One wanted to know where the "capitol" of Capitol Hill was. Was there a capitol building? They were disappointed to find out there was not. They told me their adventures so far: they've seen Kurt Cobain's house and Jimi Hendrix's grave. When they asked what there was to do around here, I mentioned the pool hall called The Garage and one of them cried, "Oh yeah, isn't that owned by some guy in Pearl Jam?" The rock fan's tour of Seattle-ac

"My Mom Hit Me and it Felt Like a Kiss," one of a pair of lesbians looking at magazines read off a zine title. Then she paused. "Oh, that's "My Man." Never mind."--ac

An older man with close-cropped hair and immediate bad vibes walked in the door. "Hi hon," he said. "I don't want any of your books. I have something to sell."

He unzipped his black shoulder bag and pulled out a big red hunk of meat shrink-wrapped onto a foam tray which he dropped onto the counter with a thud. I don't eat meat, but I think it was a roast. This was what he was selling.

"No thanks," I said.

He picked up his meat and put it back in his bag. "I'm 47 years old. I'm homeless. I'm a Vietnam vet. And I don't give a shit," he concluded And left. --ac

Somehow we got a Rush Limbaugh book that even Books-to-Prisoners refused to take to put on their 50 cent cart. Rush's picture on the dust jacket was all marked up with magic marker horns and mustache and other improvements. Sean stuck a sign on it proclaiming "We pay you!" and put it in the window.

A big hulking guy came in and lurked around the free stuff while I was talking to a customer. When we stopped talking, the big guy asked what that "We pay you" sign in the window meant. "It's a joke," I said. He obviously didn't get it. He was rather poorly dressed and seemingly not too bright. He wanted to take me up on this special offer, so I gave him a quarter and off the big lug went with his new possession. --ac

MOVE YOUR PELVIS

Night shift.

So a woman came in and asked to hang a flyer for a fringe theatre show. I told her to find a space and go ahead. She taped it up and started a conversation with me about how tap water contains all these things that will rot Your teeth and basically kill you over the course of seventy years or so. The conversation led to acting and then from acting to what's going on at the Oddfellows Hall [a local venue lot theatre] which according to her is evil. So I asked, What do you mean. evil? Like the hotel in The Shining or what?" Yes," she said.

I told her about the classes I take there and how positive things are going on there now. No good. She still insisted, "It's evil. So I started explaining one of my classes to her that had to do with acting and how in this particular class we learned how to move our pelvises more.

"Why don't you move your pelvis?" she asked, I said I thought people in general have a stigma about rolling their pelvises. "It's very sexual," I added.

She looked at me with a hard stare and asked, "Are you a survivor of childhood sexual abuse?" "Not that I know of," I answered. "Oh. But you wouldn't remember it. It sounds like this problem you have with your pelvis and not moving it is a symptom of- repressed childhood sexual abuse." "I doubt it," I said. She lowered her chin and looked at me with a smile from the top of her eyes like she knew the real truth that I'm afraid to admit. --for

Night shift. I asked a woman for her I.D. when she wrote it check, She gave me her driver's license, her concealed weapons permit, and her handgun range punch card from the Mountlake Terrace Gun Range. The punch holes were me of little hearts. She also told me that you can choose from a lot of life-sized targets there, including Barney. police officers, and a fat white trash man holding a beer can. --tor

A middle-aged man came over to the counter and asked if I "had heard about the universe." "What about it?" I asked warily, He then went on a long explanation about how some scientists a hundred years ago made a "louse" (the singular of "lice," I take it) out of some water and batteries; they created life. He used his hands to demonstrate the appearance of a louse, his thumb tucked between two fingers on either side was the head, the fingers the legs. He looked like he was making an elaborate shadow puppet. And now that we have telescopes, the guy continued, we can see that nebulae took just like the shape of it louse. And the Earth is on a long hair on the back of a louse. He indicated a hair on his wrist. He then said he was an atheist and asked if I was. -ac

That weird tall guy with the bandanna on his head and the blasting earphones who always makes such it procedure of digging his 50 cents out. to pay for the newspaper was standing at the counter as I innocently opened a package that had arrived via UPS. We've been getting packages these day from Poetry Festival participants because we will be running the book table at the event, so that's what I thought it was when I didn't recognize the return address: "Emerald Bay Publishing."

But what I pulled out was not poetry chapbooks, but something called "For Play" with a big-haired blonde woman featured on the cover licking an equally big, cock The bandanna guy saw this and started going on about how he should be a bookstore so he could get sent stuff like this... We were sent three copies of this highquality publication, the letter from the publisher stating, "Please put these on your shelf and see how they move. If it's anything like other stores in your area. they will be gone soon." What "it" is referring to, I'm not sure.----ac

WHAT MEN REALLY DO WITH THEIR HOLES

Last Tuesday I was putting the garbage can on the curb, next to a parked City Light truck. One of the workers asked me if I was the owner of the shop and he proceeded to inform me that putting anything on a phone pole violates the anti-postering ordinance (a favorite among artists and musicians locally prohibiting putting posters on phone poles because this creates an "unsafe condition," according to the City, for City Light workers who climb poles). Consequently, this guy informed me, the hook which I embedded about 15 feet up the pole from which I strung some Christmas lights, was illegal and I could be facing a 30 dollar fine.

Feeling, weak in the knees, I pinched myself, closed my eyes really tight, thinking maybe I had slipped into the Land o' Idiots, but when I opened them again, he was still there. I said, "Oh."

Mr. City light worker told me that the only reason he's telling me is because he knew a guy who was climbing a pole and he felt some Christmas lights in his back and it startled him so much that he fell and broke his leg. "Gosh," I said, and I told him that were such a thing to happen here, I expect I'd have about as much liability as I'd have for the Mad Hatter drowning in his tea cup. I asked it that hard hat had ever saved his life.

So I figured if the fucker reports me I'll have to get a little something on him. Seeing that he is working directly outside the storefront windows, I sat at the front desk. and recorded what he did for the next two hours: 11:00 -- 11 :50 Stood over his man hole and bullshitted, mostly with this guy mixing small quantities of cement and lowering them down the hole. 11:50 He looked at a small rectangular device that came up from the hole as he ate a pastry. 11:55 Makes a phone call on his cell phone. 12:05 He goes down the hole, comes back up. 12: 10 Lowers the rectangular device back down. 12:10 -- 12:45 Bullshits, watches window washer working across the street. 12:45 Meets with supervisor, who goes down the hole. 12:50 -- 1:00 Scratches nuts, bullshits.

Maybe I could get a little column in the local alternative paper, -"Hole Watch". -sc

WHEN IN SEATTLE GO TO PISTIL BOOKS!!!

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I'm doing all these 'ads' so excuse me when I repeat myself, but if you really want to be informed, you need Z, CAQ, the Multinational Monitor and the Anderson Valley Advertiser. I want you to grind your teeth along with me. I want you to feel that urge to kick a USA Today box into the gutter. I want you to know the difference between 'national interests' and 'human needs'. Outcast yourself!

FROM THE SOUTH OF THE WORLD.

by Carlos in Santiago

Seen from the outside, Chile seems a very repressive country. Seen from the inside, is so much worse. Since the dictatorship was over, the media has been trying to force us to believe that we live in an exceptional democracy that we should be proud of. Fairy tales apart, at the end of 1989 (when the plebiscite done by the dictatorship ended the reign of the Pinochet boys) it was easier for most of the people to see who was the fascist on the ballot box. The milicos; wrote a bunch of laws to make it difficult (and in some case forbid) the investigation on most human rights violations. The most famous is the Amnesty law that denies the chance to process those criminals in uniform who acted during 1973 and 1978. Also, as a way to avoid that serious changes could be made or that the constitution that they themselves wrote could be reformed, they created the designated senators: 9 guys that were elected by Pinochet himself that can vote on the discussion of any aspect of law. The presence of these non-elected fellas created a false balance between senators of the right and left wing on the congress.

Today, if you want a definition of our principal political blockades, we have thieves on the left and murderers on the right. The Christian Democracy (DC), the Party For Democracy (PPD) and the Socialist Party (PS) set up the Concertacion of Parties for Democracy--a bunch of new and old political parties from middle left that were set to rebuild democracy after the demise of the authoritarian regime (that's the favorite euphemism used by right wing journals to describe local tyranny). Of course no one was in the mood to remember that the leaders of the Christian Democracy (the party who got two consecutive presidents elected during the 90s, Patricio Aylwin and Eduardo Frei) happily endorsed the fascist coup on 1973 because back then they were waiting that once the soldiers ended the dirty job they would hand them the political power. A lot of people think that this is exactly what happened, if not as fast as politicians wanted or expected. during the months before Pinochet left the power in march of 1990 some members of his political staff and some pro democracy characters negotiated the conversion towards democracy. It's a well know fact that during those conversations a dead serious Pinochet said openly that ;if you touch one of my men, the bill of rights is cancelled; one of the many pressures that he put on the new government of the Concertacion. For all this reasons, to be a member of the Christian Democracy un democratacristiano means to be someone without personal opinion, always trying to get a position of personal power, the strawman of the big bosses and militaries. Cases of corruption involving their militants have made a lot of people vote on the last elections for right wing candidates, who try by all means necessary to seem pro democratic and non authoritarian, even when they worked inside Pinochet's regime. It can be scary to think how easy people can forget what these bastards did in the past.

Things hasn't been always like this. Class struggle in chilean history hasn't been registered by mainstream historians, who pretend to think that this country was build up by heroic soldiers and the nationalist elite. The first chilean syndicates where build up by anarchist during late XIX century, specially at the mines of the north (known as salitreras) and the coal mines of the south. Exploitation

was at it's peak, but workers organized mutuales and sociedades de resistencia (funds to be used in case of strike or the loss of job of comrades). One of the most unknown facts in chilean history is that during a huge strike in 1900 on which the city of Santiago was turned upside down, the anarchists militias get into the house of government (the Casa de Moneda, a name too stupid to be translated) during one whole day, later expelled by the army. Historians don't want things like this to be remembered, so they avoid talking about our radical movements, specially the brutal backlash that came after 1909. On that year thousands of workers from the salitreras marched through the dessert towards the city of Iquique where they asked to the owners of the Company to discuss their demands. The bosses instead sent the army, who slaughtered at least 2000 men, women and children on the Santa Maria school, the place where the workers and their families where staying during the conferences. As you may imagine, the massacre of the Santa Maria school was a horrible moment almost forgotten in our history books, and it also meant a blow to the power that working class anarchist organization had back then. From then on the new Communist Party, helped by the victory of the russian revolution seemed to take the offensive on the working class struggle.

One of the saddest achievements of the army during their 16 years was the almost complete crush of the blossoming working class movement that during Allende's government (between 1970 to 1973) seemed able to change this whole plutocracy.

However, one of the big focus of left wing resistance (against the dictatorship in the past and the neoliberal system now) is on some of the universities. As our educational system is really expensive and not as good as it should be, last year there were big protests, strikes and demos asking more money to help the most underprivileged students. Daniel Menco, a student from Arica and singer in a local punk band, was shot in the head by a policeman during one of these protests, and even when his killer has been perfectly identified, to this day he hasn't seen one day behind bars.

Sadly, we are accustomed to see this kind of shit going on. Impunity is common in crimes committed by uniformed men, even during this 10 years of democracy. At least 6 conscripts (boys doing the obligatory military service during for a year) have died in strange circumstances in the 90s, but military justice has done absolutely nothing. There's one particular case: one of the boys seemed to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, and saw an official talking inside the boot camp with a well known drug seller. Months later only his skull appeared inside a cave in a place somewhere near the regiment.

As you can imagine, our justice system is incredible corrupt and slow. It can't even stand open critics, and have taken to court an important number of journalists accusing them of revealing information that could compromise the security of the state. Last year the judge of

the Supreme Court Servando Jordán ordered the banning of &The Black Book of the Chilean Justice; a book that exposed the dark secrets of Jordán and other powerful judges (as being drunk during trials, and his sexual preferences for school girls). The journalist who wrote the book had to escape from Chile the same day it was put for sale to avoid a prison sentence for charges of defamation; the only case of 'quick and efficient justice' we have seen here. Since that day the only copies you can buy of the Black Book are ironically on the black market.

16 years of repression created an effective trauma in the common people, who are very afraid to go against the grain and express their discontent on a public level. Everybody in this country knows the things I'm writing, but nobody says them out loud. We live in a culture very afraid of freedom of the individual, especially on sexual issues. The Catholic Church has great political power, to the extreme that abortion is illegal inside Chilean territory. Gay people can't go on the streets holding hands or kissing each other without the threat of being attacked by macho jocks. Even the police could arrest them for acts against public morals (no joke). The guardians of our morality can go a lot far to ban the exposure of any artistic expression or view that goes against their beliefs. The Last Temptation of Christ cannot be seen inside Chile because an ultra moralist pressure group (El Porvenir de Chile) presented a judicial order against the exhibition of a film that denied the holiness of Christ(!).

Doing this, they established a legal precedent that can be used to stop the projection of any movie that moralists don't want us to see; even though the papers talk a lot about absence of censorship in this beautiful land. The conservative owners of chains of cinemas have also a more obscure and powerful way of censorship: the economic barriers. Movies that have a controversial argument (like almost everything done by British filmmaker Ken Loach and Dogma from Kevin Smith) find a lot of problems to be shown at a commercial level and we all know who pulls the strings behind the movies enterprise here. If you have a guy like Jesse Fallwell, we have Archbishop José Medina. Monseñor Medina is one of the most prominent cruzados fighting against anything that in his view can be a tool of the devil (his words, not mine). Years ago he bought a lot of hazardous dirty magazines (like Playboy and Penthouse) in order to throw them at the office of the mayor of Viña del Mar, screaming out loud that they represented the degradation that was attacking our society. Recently he asked all the Catholic members of the senate to vote against the much delayed project of law that could make divorce legal in Chile. He said something very similar to if 'you approve it, you'll all burn in hell.' This could sound laughable if wankers like these didn't have so much power, but Medina has very close ties with the Vatican authorities, something that makes him almost untouchable, no matter how stupid and malevolent are the things he says. Also due to the pressure coming from the church, on Chilean TV there's no campaign to educate people on ways to avoid teenage pregnancy or AIDS, because that would imply that mention of the use of condoms as something good (and that's wrong as our dear John Paul II has said a million times) so a lot of young people are having unsafe sex and risking their lives thanks to the efforts of the our church.

Looking at the state of the mainstream Chilean mentality can lead to pessimistic conclusions, however, some things that

I have seen in the last years make me think that there's hope for the future. There are groups of young people now organized to find a way to delete the obligatory military service, something unthinkable during the 80s. A big group of writers and artists have created the Universal Movement Against Censorship as a way to oppose the conservative barriers created by authority in the last years. Pinochet have lost his parliamentary immunity; and can face a trial.

Meanwhile, in the forests of the south, the mapuches are organized and fighting against the companies who stole their lands. Also there's an reborn of anarcho syndicalist organizations, but most of these people must act incognito, because Military Intelligence has been monitoring their activities, sending undercover agents to infiltrate them. The people I know in this movement make me think that fascists won't get away with it again easily. At least, there's some people here willing to fight.

-Carlos

---don't let the bastards grind you down

Fighting Capitalists, Building Movements

-written by Erik Hanould

I recently took part in my first union convention, that of ILWU Local 142 in Hawaii. I've worked for the union since March and had been having reservations about working here, having witnessed some rather unsavory political BS within the union. Some of the bureaucratic crap has also diminished my expectations of the progressive if not radical or revolutionary potential of labor unions.

Many activists on the left see the ILWU as the one of, if not the most, democratic, militant, and radical unions in existence today. Having witnessed it firsthand, I have to say how incredibly impressed with the democratic process (not the horse race we're fed in the media) in this proudly rank and file union. It has reconfirmed my commitment to the labor movement and has cemented my belief in the very real potential for unions to serve as the building blocks of a truly-functioning democracy in the struggle to eliminate human oppression of all kinds.

The founding and history of ILWU in Hawaii is importantly different from its west-coast counterpart of the same name. Eventually I hope to examine in more depth the history and political agenda of the union in the islands, but for now I'll merely present a sketch.

A Brief History of the ILWU in Hawai'i

Although workers first organized on the waterfront in the 1930s, union leaders quickly recognized the necessity of organizing workers in the sugar and pineapple plantations. While the docks were of key importance for obvious reasons, it was sugar and pineapple in the islands which were the bread and butter of the Big Five employers: Castle & Cooke, C. Brewer & Co., Alexander and Baldwin, American Factors, and Gaye and Robinson. (The Big Five actually were like one company since the owners sat on each other's Boards of Directors and acted as one on all matters and completely dominated the territorial legislature.) Moreover, these industries represented the highest concentration of workers of any industry in the islands. The only way to challenge the political, economic, and social hegemony of these capitalists was to organize all the workers of these two industries into one industrial union.

Workers on the plantations lived in virtual servitude, much like sharecroppers of the American South. Moreover, because the islands were geographically isolated and racially fragmented, the employers exercised absolute control over their subjects, like kings in a capitalist nirvana. The plantations operated as paternalistic fiefdoms: workers lived in company housing, bought from the company store, and, for those who could vote, voted for the company's choice of candidate. White overseers on white horses drove workers like mules in the blazing sun.

In 1946, an industry-wide Sugar Strike organized by the ILWU represented the first time the hegemonic powers of the Big Five had had their authority effectively challenged, and it signaled the tipping in the balance of power from capitalists to workers. It was the first time workers in the islands organized along industrial and interracial lines instead of along craft and racial lines, as had been the practice in the past when employers set Filipino against Tongan, Malay against Hawaiian, Japanese against Portuguese, Samoan against Haole, and so forth.

During the 1949 Longshore Strike, Hawaii Longshoremen demanded parity with their west coast counterparts who performed the same work yet were paid significantly more. Hawaii longshoremen struck and brought economic activity in the islands to a standstill, stirring fears of communist revolution in the ruling elite. The local newspaper editor wrote daily columns as though they were dispatches from union leaders to Joseph Stalin.

These inflammatory editorials purposefully ignored some basic facts about the manner in which the union functioned: *all* actions were determined by the rank and file, with the leaders merely serving as negotiators who then submitted proposals to the membership for a vote. So while the newspapers printed schlock about commie union leaders, the rank and file were saying, "who's a commie? I don't even know what a communist is. I just want what is fair." The victory on the waterfront, achieved through interracial solidarity, demonstrated that workers from different countries could stand together to and bring the economic life of the islands to a standstill to gain equality with workers from across the ocean. But more importantly, the struggle taught the workers they that they had the power to beat the bosses.

Through the early battles and victories over capitalists, on the waterfront and in the fields and processing plants, the Local developed a strongly internationalist and interracial outlook strongly rooted in the communities. The rank and file learned important lessons in the meaning of union democracy and the responsibilities of unionists.

One of the more interesting aspects about this Local is that from it's earliest days it pursued a policy of encouraging rank and file members to run for elected office or to volunteer for key committees as a way to get them integrated in the political life of the territory. The union then educated and mobilized the rank and file to support progressive legislation written by the union to establish some of the most far-reaching initiatives to protect workers and the under-classes, whether they were union members or not.

All positions within the union are directly elected with numerous opportunities for workers to become active in the political life of the union through various committees, boards, and directly-elected positions (Business Agents, Local Executive Board, Political Action Committee, President, etc.). And as in several socialist groups, the highest decision-making body is the tri-annual Local Convention where representatives are elected by their units and sent to help formulate policy and the direction the union will take until the

following convention.

Today the ILWU is the largest and most powerful union in the state. Times have changed quite a bit since the heady days of a feared communist takeover, but the union retains a commitment to fighting for local and global justice. This past year we reaffirmed our commitments to organizing the unorganized and supporting movements for global justice. The degree of democratic functioning of the union is still impressive and presents a tremendous platform for activists to partake in promoting progressive policy and resolutions which can then be acted upon by the union as a whole.

The democratic process as it currently exists in the ILWU on the Local level provides for any member of the rank and file to submit resolutions or Constitutional amendments for the convention delegates to consider and vote on. This also provides a forum for progressives and, dare I say, a radical, to introduce his or her ideas, something I witnessed a few times this year. While the union may not adopt a proposed resolution, the fact that there is even a forum to air views on just about any issue is of utmost importance in an era of shrinking diminishing public spaces. If the union does adopt a resolution it gives an activist a platform to agitate among the rank and file and thereby continue to push the union and its leaders in more progressive directions. If activists in other unions pursue this sort of strategy, it could help put the "move" back in "Labor Movement" propelling unions back to the forefront of social activism.

The Larger Picture

While I have focused on the ILWU, I hope to convey in this passage the incredibly rich opportunity for young activists to get involved in a wider movement that offers viable avenues to actively challenge corporate power while simultaneously working to extend basic rights to huge numbers of people who are actively denied these basic rights on a daily basis.

Although I believe that organizing street demonstrations to focus the public's attention on specific issues can be important (such as the WTO, the Republican's conventions, etc.), I don't believe it should be the main focus of radical organizing for it will be impossible to sustain for the long term and, increasingly, capitalists will learn more effective techniques to neutralize popular protests. Labor activism on the other hand gives radical activists both short and long-term goals: an ongoing fight with the bosses (on the shop floor) to make the workplace a more tolerable place in the short term as well as an organization to push to more radical ideas. Without constant reinvigoration of new activists, unions become bureaucratic and staid organizations, more interested in protecting their gains than fighting for new gains for oppressed members of society.

So for the young social activist who wants to make a difference but doesn't know where to start: get a job in a union shop and get active in that union. Better yet, if you work in a non-union shop, do a little agitating, educating, and organizing of your fellow malcontents, rub raw the wounds of discontent, get ye to a union hall and ask for help in organizing a union in your workplace. Then you can fuck with the bosses on the shop floor. But better yet, you can get involved in an organization that can provide a forum for your radical views to be aired and perhaps acted upon.

As Harry Bridges, the legendary leader of the ILWU, once said, "you don't join a union to have a fighting chance. You join a union to have a chance to fight." Anyone want to fight some capitalists?

-written by Erik Hanoult
Rattlesnake #1-page 125

NADER AND THE ELECTION (by T.S.)

The media belittlement of the man and the campaign, exclusion from debates and the liberal backlash concerning the Nader run is what really interests me. It is a blatantly clear mirror against their lie of 'democracy.'

NY Times editorial of June 30 "Nader's Misguided Crusade." TheTimes asserted that there is a "clear-cut choice" between Gore and Bush and demanded that Nader get out of the way so the two major parties can "compete on an uncluttered playing field."

Nader is not really that left; just an intelligent hardworking humanitarian and yes I did vote for him, and no, not much would change if he even did get the 5% to get funds for next elections. Voting for leftists or left-liberals is really important on a local basis. They can directly effect housing and a bit of economics, though usually all that happens without a militant threatening 'left' in this country, is that they act as only minor barriers or stop-gaps against an even worse situation in our cities. State level and nation wide, a third party candidate will never win and never has nationally. The corporate media control that level of information too diligently and the whole process involves too much money to even get a modicum of access. Think about how Nader is/was actually more well-known and popular than either two candidates, but still, besides on one major cable channel, he was never allowed to go into any in-depth discussions and not allowed in the debates. Polls said people favored him to be on the debates 2 to 1. Sadly, the people that do vote, get most of their information from TV, where discussion is not encouraged and 60 second hit ads can swing elections. You may say I am an idealist, but I believe the 60% of the population that do not vote are not stupid; they know nothing will really change through the ballot box. You cannot underestimate the power of mass media to spook people either. As I mention in the letter below, Debs, supported by a millions strong Socialist party, a socialist press that reached millions (which if you adjusting for increased population would translate to over 10 million now), only got 1 million in 1920. And in that year, 5 elected socialists were simply DENIED their seats in the NY legislature. There are many many other sorry episodes such as FDR (the 'left' democrat) helping the Republicans defeat Upton Sinclair in California that illustrate how their game is theirs, and not ours.

The 'liberal' outrage that Nader voters gave the election to Bush is absurd and their attacks before the election were more vicious and dishonest than from the right. Harry Evans (NY Times) "I want to kill Ralph Nader" (Hilary Clinton jokingly said at a party maybe someone should). John Tudis (In These Times-a 'left' paper-I cancelled my sub!) voting one's conscience is "like something you do in a confessional or a church." Todd Gitlin (Salon.com) Likened Nader supporters to cult followers. Democratic Leadership Conference said Nader has "pulp-novel conspiracy theories." Senator Joseph Biden "Ralph Nader is not going to be welcome anywhere near the corridors." John Sweeney (AFL-CIO) "Reprehensible." Eric Alterman (Nation Magazine) Nader developed an "infantile left-wing disorder.) Patricia Ireland, president of the National Organization for Women, called Nader

"ill-informed about abortion rights," and noted his 10-page candidacy statement "did not mention any explicitly feminist issues, not birth control or abortion . . . and not violence against women." (This is what I mean by dishonest. There was NOW and pro women's rights stuff all over the Nader web-site). She also had the nerve to criticize his stance on gay issues, knowing full well that Gore, the born again christian has several anti-gay votes in his record, aligned with Jesse Helms on one issue, and is against legal gay marriage.

Nader commented: "It's amazing, the cynical manipulators behind these two party candidates," he said. "They really think they can lie, cheat and flummox the public and get away with it. Because they don't think the press is going to hold them accountable."

Carole Migden, Bay Area Clinton lesbian democrat tried to claim that Nader was in the closet...why this should matter she doesn't say... Migden said. "All I'm saying is that we believe he has strong ties to the community — and has for years — and hasn't been forthright about it." Nader replied, "That's like asking, 'When did you stop beating your wife?', " (Nader told Matier and Ross of the Examiner) "But the answer to her inference (that I'm gay) is no." "...I've spoken out on gay and lesbian issues way in advance of Al Gore," he said, adding that — unlike his Democratic opponent —he supports both civil marriages and eliminating the "don't ask, don't tell" policy for gays in the military.

Tom Ammiano — our favorite San Francisco supervisor — thinks Migden is swinging blind. "If he was sabotaging gay rights, I could see some point," he said. "I mean, what is this? The old 'he's over 40 and single' profile? Heck, that could have been state Assemblyman Kevin Shelley until he got married last year. 'But I tell you what,' Ammiano said. "If Ralph ever calls me for a date - you'll be the first to know."

Anyway, this year is something to remember for the future. The whole picture. The liberals can't take truth about economics and military/corporate issues anymore than the right, and you should never trust a democrat, local or not. They will play the party rather than expose mass murder, rather than help educate the electorate, rather than let even a whisper of democracy escape from their box.

In case you missed out on some the good interviews with Nader before the election such as in Harper's and various left papers, here some comments from him to get an idea of what has to be left out of mainstream political discussion in the US:

"There isn't even a tiny little transaction tax on trillions of dollars of stock transactions every week," Nader said.

"In some states, you buy food and you pay a sales tax . . . but you don't pay a sales tax when you buy 50,000 options or 200,000 shares," he said. "And that is a huge revenue source that would help pay for universal health care and education." [ed note-and sales taxes are so regressive that working class people pay twice as much according to share of income compared to the upper class]

— On issues: "We're getting all kinds of discussion of issues that are being ignored: WTO-NAFTA. Corporate welfare. Widespread documentation by the media of corporate crimes and abuse by HMOs and insurance companies, about which the two parties do nothing."

— On foreign policy: "(We need) a foreign policy which, 10 years after the demise of the Soviet Union, begins to side with the workers and the peasants for a change instead of continually funneling weapons for dictators and oligarchs."

— On education: "We're the ones who first threw the gauntlet down against standardized testing. It leads to standardized thinking, to standardized curriculum, to standardized expectations, and they don't test the real important things about students: their judgment, their creativity."

— On voter concerns: "There's one thing that all Americans share. They feel they've lost control over everything that matters to them, from their kids, to their government, to their workplace, to their genes. And that feeling is deep, whether you call yourselves liberal or conservative."

— On gay and lesbian rights: "That's one of the few

major differences (between the major parties), in reality, not just in rhetoric. But (Massachusetts Rep.-gay) Barney Frank is supporting Al Gore, who does not believe in equal rights for gays and lesbians in the military, and who does not believe in civil unions. . . . I have a much better set of policies for gays and lesbians than his buddy Al Gore. He doesn't want to believe that."

(Letter to the Anderson Valley Advertiser by Tommy)

2.7 MILLION PEOPLE SAID SCREW YOU

I don't wonder why I only lasted through one year of journalism school in 1981. Even at a dull age 20, I couldn't stand wading through the shit then. I haven't seen one article yet by a mainstream journalist that took the integrity to look up the numbers about the election. The screaming shrill consensus everywhere is that Nader took the election from Gore. The AVA has had a multitude of informative and compassionate news and commentary from Nader voters so I won't belabor the fact that Gore is a right wing homicidal blood sucking tick riding the back of the corporate (and oil) gorilla.

But I can't help be even more outraged over liberals' complete fog bank of the facts. Sure I expect them to ignore 1 million dead Iraqis, and a Reagan type war in Columbia. Their kind did or would have voted for LBJ and be proud of it. This 'Nader Gave the Election to the Right-wing' crap will surely become an accepted 'truth' as has the still repeated ones such as 'the left didn't vote for Humphrey and gave us Nixon, and the left didn't vote for McGovern andand oh, hold-my-ass-back, I even saw one letter in the SFBayGuardian which claimed that John Anderson voters gave Reagan the election!

In any of these articles or public denunciations, you never learn of turnout or percentages among all three candidates. The journalist or liberal pundit claims to know that anyone voting for a liberal or left third candidate would have otherwise voted democrat. There is no proof of this whatsoever, and exit polls are not proof. People are known to fib coming out of the polls or in any kind of 'who/how did you vote' survey. The Census Bureau even notes this on their projections pages. And the numbers clearly show the opposite.

Take 1968. The 'left (whatever the hell that is here) supposedly ditched—letting Nixon Beat Humphrey. Turnout has steadily dropped since 1960, wherein a part of the 2 million blacks down south who finally got the right to register tried it (they are now down to less than 50% turnout of those registered). We will leave aside the question of why anyone should have bothered with Democrat Humphrey when Democrat LBJ promised to end the war too four years before. In 1968 there was a 60% turnout. 3 Million more people voted in 1968 than in 1964. In '72, turnout drops to 55% but 4 million more people voted than 1968! (McGovern vs Nixon) The population as a percentage is just voting less over the past 40 years. There is NO huge swing in and out that corresponds to any 3rd party candidate, or claim of some conspiratorial boycott. People just care less and less with good reason.

In 1996, their weenie wagging man won. Clinton got over 47 million votes, Dole got 39 million, and Nader got 684,000. This election had the lowest turnout since 1948 according to the USCB. Clinton won Tennessee in '96 (11 electoral votes). Gore lost it, his home state! Now when we move to the present the numbers underline the new liberal lie. As of 12/1, Gore has 50,100,000 and Bush 49,800,000, with Bush winning with more electoral system numbers. Oh shit, the republican voters took the elec-

tion from Gore! What a surprise! 10 Million more people voted for Republican Bush than Republican Dole! Or maybe those were 'Nader voters' who were being extra devious!

Strike that, the liberals may run with that conspiracy theory.

So far the turnout looks only 1 percentage point above 1996, but still that is an upswing we haven't seen. Did Nader bring em out? 8 Million more people voted in 2000. But that conclusion is hard to support when 10 million more came out for Bush than Dole. More people percentage-wise voted this election, a reverse from the last election. The real gist of this is that 2 million more people voted for Gore than Clinton in '96. Nader's total is so far only 2,781,000. Why can't any goddamn journalist question that of the new 7 million voters, Nader's votes came from there? And why isn't anyone anywhere mentioning that Bush got such a jump from Dole? Really repeat that in the liberals' face: Gore got 2 million more votes than Clinton, Bush got 10 million more than Dole. No Nader voters 'stole' and voted from the Democrats—their party gave them to the Republicans.

In California, Gore got 100,000 more votes than Clinton in '96, while Nader got only 140,000 more this time around. Big fucking deal. All that work that the people and Ralph did and he only got 372,000 votes in California. Gore got a total of over 5 million. The increase in numbers both for Gore and overwhelmingly for Bush show that the vast majority of Nader voters would have not picked either of the other two.

Work Harder on a 3rd Party? It's never worked before here. Remember how Eugene Debs at one time got almost 1 million votes and it did not make a dent in social or international policy one bit. The Palmer raids then came, 10,000 leftists thrown in prison in one day.

I will always vote, but the third party state and federal office ballot in a capitalist democracy is as much of a solution as Clinton's funding abstinence programs is to fight against teen age pregnancy. You get screwed all the time and try to deny it. (End)

Towards Social Justice: Elizabeth 'Betita' Martinez and the Institute for MultiRacial Justice

by Chris Crass

Elizabeth 'Betita' Martinez is a national and international treasure. Her life and work provide a model of internationalism and solidarity, as well as local organizing. 'Think globally, act locally' was her practice long before the slogan was created. From work for decolonization at the United Nations, to the Civil Rights Movement, to pioneering the women's liberation movement, to local organizing in New Mexico and California, to top-rate journalism and political theory, Betita continues to blaze trails and create priceless legacies, mentoring countless social activists, young and old, male and female, people of all colors, gay and straight, always with astonishing patience and intelligence." This is how Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz describes her friend of 30 years. Dunbar-Ortiz has been involved in radical politics and activism since the sixties. She founded one of the first groups of the Womens Liberation Movement, Cell 16 and helped edit their journal, "No More Fun and Games". She is the author of *Red Dirt: Growing Up Okie* and she's a regular reader at the Anarchist Cafe nights in San Francisco.

Elizabeth 'Betita' Martinez lives in the Mission District of San Francisco, where she is involved in many different projects and campaigns. Her main project is the Institute for MultiRacial

Justice, which she co-founded in 1997. She serves as the co-chair of the Institute and edits the Institute's publication, *Shades of Power*. The Institute aims to "serve as a resource center that will strengthen the struggle against White Supremacy by combating the tactics of divide-and-control and advancing solidarity among people of color" (from the group's Mission Statement). The Institute serves as a clearinghouse of information about joint work done by communities of color locally, regionally and eventually on a national basis. The Institute provides educational materials to help build greater understanding and respect between people of color. Working to build solidarity between communities of color, the Institute holds educational forums on topics and issues that are not only important to communities of color, but that have divided people of color. Forum topics have included immigrant rights and bilingual education and the these events bring together organizers from various groups to have a dialogue about the issues. These forums and other work done by the Institute try to provide a site for people from different communities of color to meet with each other and find ways to support one another.

In October of 99, Martinez and the Institute put together the *Shades of Power Festival: Alliance Building With Film and Video*. The festival's program stated, "the movies show how different peoples of color in the U.S. have related and worked together in common struggles for social justice. A few of the videos focus on a single group whose struggle continues today and needs support from other people of color." The festival featured movies about Ethnic Studies student strikes in 69-69, the Puerto Rican Young Lords Party, Angela Davis, June Jordan, Yuri Kochiyama, the Japanese Internment Camps during WWII, housing struggles by Latinos, Filipinos, African-Americans, repression and resistance at the U.S. Mexico border, labor organizing and environmental justice campaigns. In all, about 20 films were viewed. Between movies, there were four discussion panels with organizers from various groups on gentrification in San Francisco, immigrant rights and environmental justice. Hundreds of people went to the festival.

The other main project of the Institute is publishing *Shades of Power*. It is published as a step in the direction of creating an anti-racist, anti-capitalist ideological climate. *Shades of Power*, which is currently on its 6th issue, is full of articles on organizing around environmental justice issues, police brutality, violence in public schools, workers' rights, immigration and incarceration - to name a few. All of the articles focus on proactive campaigns and positive activism with special attention paid to alliance building among people of color. *Shades of Power* helps the Institute work towards their long-term goals. According to their mission statement, the Institute is "committed to linking the struggle of Third World unity with struggles to build a new society free of class relations, sexism, homophobia, environmental abuse, and the other diseases of our times". Working with women's groups is a special focus of the Institute, "because women have often taken the lead in building alliances among people of color". Organizing with youth is also a major focus of the Institute with the goal of developing autonomous youth initiatives. The Institute was active in the youth led campaign against Proposition 21 in California. Prop 21, the juvenile crime initiative, makes it easier to prosecute children as adults, broadly defines gangs and gang membership to include most aspects of hip-hop culture and criminalizes it and plays on social fears of crime committed by young people of color - regardless of the fact that violent youth crime has declined significantly in the last few years. When youth organizations like Third Eye Movement, Homey Network and the Critical Resistance Youth Task Force mobilized and organized thousands of young people, the Institute offered support and solidarity. As Roxanne stated ear-

lier, Betita is a mentor to countless activists and organizers. Her years of experience, her firm dedication to radical social change and her wisdom and insights into organizing have influenced and inspired many who are active today, especially young women of color organizers.

In addition to the Institute, Martinez is also involved with many different organizations in the Bay Area, such as the Women of Color Resource Center and Media Alliance. Betita is also the author of the book *De Colores Means All Of Us: Latina Views of a Multi-Colored Century*, published by South End Press in 1998. Betita's book, *De Colores Means All Of Us*, which hit the shelves last year is a chronicle of organizing and alliance building throughout her years of work. The book is a collection of essays that range from discussions on attacks against immigrant rights and affirmative action to contemporary struggles for Ethnic Studies led by Latina/o youth. Betita's book is full of essays that develop a radical Chicana perspective and analysis on society, race relations, history, dynamics between men and women in past and present activism and on the future of building a multiracial, anti-racist, queer liberationist, feminist, anti-capitalist movement. The essays are packed with stories, examples of past activism, models of past and present organizing and inspiration to implement lessons in the book into our organizing efforts.

Elizabeth Martinez traces her political consciousness back to her childhood. Her father had moved from Mexico into the US and after quite a few years of financial hardship ended up working in Washington DC as a secretary in the Mexican Embassy. She remembers growing up with stories of the Mexican Revolution, Zapata and US imperialism. Also, Martinez grew up in a middle-class white suburb of DC and was the only person of color in school, which made her painfully aware of racism and white supremacy. After World War II, Martinez went to work at the United Nations as a researcher on colonialism decolonization efforts and strategies. During the McCarthy Era, her section chief and other co-workers at the UN were fired for having past or present connections with Communism. In 1959, three months after the Cuban Revolution claimed victory, Martinez went to Cuba to witness a successful anti-colonial, socialist struggle. This trip to Cuba had a profound impact on her. In addition to Cuba, Martinez later traveled to the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary, Vietnam (during the war) and China to witness and observe how people were implementing socialism.

When the sit-in movement swept across the South in 1960, a new and exciting form of direct action organizing was taking shape which soon led to the formation of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. SNCC was one of the most important organizations of the 1960's as it successfully experimented with various forms of community organizing, direct action tactics, radically democratic decision-making and an egalitarian vision that inspired and influenced countless other groups and projects in that 60's and into today. While SNCC, along with the Southern Civil Rights Movement, is generally remembered as a Black led struggle with the involvement of whites - Betita was one of two Chicanas working full-time for SNCC; Maria Varela was also a SNCC organizer. Martinez originally served as the director of SNCC's office in New York. Betita edited the photo history book, *The Movement*, which not only raised funds for SNCC,

but also brought graphic images of the Civil Rights movement into homes across the United States. Martinez was an organizer with SNCC in 1964 during the Mississippi Summer project (often referred to as Freedom Summer).

In 1968, a year of revolution and repression around the world, she moved to New Mexico to work in the land grant movement of Chicanos/as struggling to recover lands lost when the US took over half of Mexico with the 1846-48 war. There she launched an important movement newspaper, *El Grito del Norte* (The Cry of the North), and continued publishing it for 5 years along with other activism. *El Grito* reported on international activism and sought to show connections between different struggles. At the Chicano Communications Center, which she co-founded in Albuquerque, she edited the bilingual pictorial volume *500 Years of Chicano History* at a time when almost no books existed on the subject. The pictorial became the basis of her educational video *Viva La Causa!* which has been shown at film festivals and classrooms across the country. In all of this activism, she worked with and trained many young Chicanas/os.

In the late 60's when the Women's Liberation Movement exploded across the country with feminist groups, publications, protest actions, manifestos and speakers everywhere, Elizabeth Martinez was in New Mexico helping shape the newly developing movement. In her essay, "History Makes Us, We Make History" from the anthology, *The Feminist Memoir Project: Voices From Women's Liberation*, Betita talks about developing a Chicana feminism that confronts race, class and gender inequality. In that essay she writes about the whiteness of the Women's Liberation Movement and the sexism in the Chicano Movement and the need to struggle against all forms of oppression. During this time, Betita was made an honorary member of WITCH (Women's International Conspiracy from Hell).

Since 1976 she has been living in the Bay Area. Betita became deeply involved in leftist party building politics for 10 years. In 1982 she ran for Governor of California on the Peace and Freedom Party ticket; the first Chicana on the ballot for that office. She has also taught courses in Ethnic Studies and Women Studies at Hayward State University. Martinez has traveled all across the United States speaking on colleges and in classrooms about race, class, gender issues and organizing. She has teamed up with longtime activist Elena Featherston, also a co-founder of the Institute, and they have done joint speaking tours called "Black and Brown - Get Down", which aim at building alliances between people of color. She has consistently been a mentor over the years to new and long-time activists and organizers helping transfer skills, knowledge and experience in effort to build our movements. In addition to editing *Shades of Power*, she is also a regular contributor to *Z Magazine* and other publications.

The Institute for MultiRacial Justice is just the latest project in a long list of efforts to make the world a better place. Like her other projects, the Institute works to develop long-range goals and vision to guide activists from one struggle to the next. As we move from one crisis to the next - from welfare reform, to the ending of affirmative action, to the bombing of Kosovo, to Mumia's execution - we become worn-down and burned-out. Betita reminds us that we must remember that we are part of a movement, we are part of

something much bigger than ourselves and we are not alone in the struggle. She reminds us that while we confront budget cuts in Ethnic Studies programs or new attacks against the civil rights of homeless people, that we must hold onto our goals - solidarity, community, revolution, egalitarianism, a new world. She reminds us that as activists, as organizers, we have a responsibility to teach and train others - that we have a responsibility to actively build a new world. Martinez also has much to say to us about how we build movements for social change. After the massive resistance to the World Trade Organization in Seattle, Martinez wrote the widely

distributed and highly influential essay, "Where Was the Color in Seattle? Looking for reasons why the Great Battle was so white".

She writes, "Understanding the reasons for the low level of color, and what can be learned from it, is crucial if we are to make Seattle's promise of a new, international movement against imperialist globalization come true." Through interviews and observations she writes about the lessons that organizers - people of color and white - must learn. We must begin connecting the issues of imperialist globalization to local community issues. White radicals need to develop and put forward an analysis of corporate domination that understands racial oppression in the third world and in the United States. She writes that radicals of color need to be networking and connecting their work with a global framework.

White radicals need to go beyond their familiar circles and form coalitions with people of color with an understanding of how white activists in the past have betrayed people of color. White radicals need a strong race, class and gender analysis and it should be central to their political worldview. It must be remembered that white radicals have a responsibility to develop anti-racist politics and actively confront white privilege. As radicals of color organize in communities of color, white radicals interested in movement building must strengthen the anti-racist politics of predominately white groups and activist communities.

Martinez also has much to say in her writings about the day-today organizing work that we engage in. She stresses that we must take education and training folks seriously. If we are to become a participatory, radically democratic, feminist, multi-racial, anti-capitalist, queer liberationist, internationalist movement - then we need to work at it. We need to teach each other skills, tactics, and political analysis so that we can all be leaders in a movement for our collective liberation. Martinez and other radicals of her generation have much to teach the younger generation of today. It is critical that we listen, learn and develop relationships based on common respect.

For more information about the Institute for MultiRacial Justice

or to receive *Shades of Power* write: 3311 Mission St., #170 SF, CA 94110 or email i4mrj@aol.com. For an inspiring read pick-up *De Colores Means All Of Us*.

GOODBYE AK PRESS!!!-leaving S.F.....

As in the usual roundabout cesspool of corporate journalism we can find more facts about US aggression and politician's maneuvers in the foreign press, we can also find more truthful articles about our city from other city papers. Their editors won't chop something 'offensive' to business interests as the locals will. Case here: The NY Times writes more truth than the SF Chronicle did about Prop L (it would not have limited office 'growth' at all) and uses the term 'working-class' in the article. Words that never came out of the mayor's mouth, as in, the working class is being pushed out, and in Prop L's case, Diane Feinstein and Willie's mailer to us all was absent of facts and patronizing to say the least. Sad but True, the lying 'paper of record' tell us more than our own paper did. (next page)

December 14, 2000-NY Times By BILL HAYES

SAN FRANCISCO — ON the evening of Dec. 2, AK Press, an anarchist book publisher, held an eviction party, an increasingly common occasion here. Four years after moving into an unheated warehouse in the Mission District, it had fallen victim to spiraling rents. "Dress warm," the invitation warned. A few blocks away, on newly fashionable Valencia Street, restaurants offered valet parking. But AK Press's guests—a mix of graying bohemians and magenta-haired young activists—arrived mostly by bike or by bus. "We need to live in a neighborhood of political writers, activists and artists," said Craig Gilmore, 50, an AK editor in a waist-length braid and a "Class War!" T-shirt. "Until now, that's been the Mission District. But when our lease is up, our rent will triple, which makes it impossible to stay."

When AK Press moved into the warehouse in 1996, the Mission was still a predominantly Latino and working-class neighborhood, dotted with tacquerias and auto-body shops. Today, more than 400 Internet firms are based there and in the adjacent South of Market district, an area which, along with nearby Potrero Hill, has come to be known as Multimedia Gulch.

The dot-com gold rush is blamed for introducing Manhattan-style traffic jams and unwanted development into San Francisco's famously picturesque neighborhoods, while skyrocketing rents drive out artists, cultural groups and working-class families. According to the California Association of Realtors, the median price of a single-family home in San Francisco is now \$463,990, a 25.9 percent increase since October 1999. Meanwhile, there are 7.5 evictions a day, according to the San Francisco Tenants Union, an advocacy group.

During the summer, a citywide coalition of artists, activists and non-profit groups collected 30,000 signatures, 10,000 more than was required, to place an antidevelopment referendum called Proposition L on the November ballot. While the measure would have actually increased the amount of new office space that could be built in the city, it would have banned such development from the Mission and other largely residential neighborhoods. It would also have closed a loophole that allows Internet companies to occupy and construct "live/work lofts," meant for artists, that are exempt from certain development taxes. -end quote-----

--thank you lesser-of-two-evils Democrats for raising hundreds of thousands of dollars to defeat a simple common sense and pro-building proposition. Someday, we will....."talk"....

HOWARD ZINN

A Campaign Without Class

(from the Progressive Magazine 12/00)

There came a rare amusing moment in this Presidential race when George W Bush (who has raised \$177 million) accused Al Gore (who has raised only \$126 million) of appealing to "class warfare." It recalled the 1988 election when Bush's father (is this a genetic disorder?) accused candidate Michael Dukakis of instigating class antagonism. I noticed that neither of the accused responded with a defiant "Yes, we have classes in this country." Only Ralph Nader has dared to suggest that this country is divided among the rich, the poor, and the nervous in between. This kind of talk is unpardonably rude and was enough to bar him from the televised debates.

We have learned that we mustn't talk of class divisions in this country. It upsets our political leaders. We must believe we are one family-me and Exxon, you and Microsoft, the children of the CEOs and the children of the janitors. We must believe our interests are the same. That's why we speak of going to war or the national interest as if it were in all our interest. That's why we maintain an enormous military budget for "national security" as if our nuclear weapons strengthen the security of all and not the securities of some. That's why our culture is soaked in the idea of patriotism, which is piped into our consciousness from the first grade, where we begin every day by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance: 11 one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

I remember stumbling over that big word "indivisible"—with good

reason, although I didn't know the reason, being quite politically backward at the age of six. Only later did I begin to understand that our nation, from the start, has been divided by class, race, national origin, has been beset by fierce conflicts, yes, class conflicts, all throughout our history. The culture labors strenuously to keep that out of the history books, to maintain the idea of a monolithic, noble "us" against a shadowy but unmistakably evil "them." It starts with the story of the American Revolution, and, as the recent movie *The Patriot* (kindergarten history, put on screen for millions of viewers) tells us once more, we were united in glorious struggle against British rule. The mythology surrounding the Founding Fathers is based on the idea that we Americans were indeed one family, and that our founding document, the Constitution, represented all our interests, as declared proudly by the opening words of its preamble: "We—the people of the United States."

It may therefore seem surly for us to report that the American Revolution was not a war waged by a united population. The 150 years leading up to the Revolution were filled with conflict, yes, class conflict—servants and slaves against their masters, tenants against landlords, poor people in the cities rioting for food and flour against profiteering merchants, mutinies of sailors against their captains. Thus, when the Revolutionary War began, some colonists saw the war as one of liberation, but many others saw it as the substitution of one set of rulers for another. As for black slaves and Indians, there was little to choose between the British and the Americans.

This class conflict inside the Revolution came dramatically alive with mutinies in George Washington's army. In 1781, after enduring five years of war (casualties in the Revolution exceeded, in proportion to population, American casualties in World War II), more than 1,000 soldiers from Pennsylvania—mostly foreign born, from Ireland, Scotland, Germany—mutinied at Morristown, New Jersey. They had seen their officers paid handsomely, fed and clothed well, while the privates and sergeants were fed stop, marched in rags without shoes, paid in virtually worthless Continental currency, or not paid at all for months. They were abused, beaten, whipped by their officers for the smallest breach of discipline. Their deepest grievance was that they wanted out of the war, claiming their terms of enlistment had expired, and they were kept in the army by force. They were aware that in the spring of 1780 eleven Morristown deserters were sentenced to death but at the last minute received a reprieve, except for one of them, who had forged discharges for 100 men. He was hanged.

General Washington, facing by this time 1,700 mutineers (a substantial part of his army), assembled them at Princeton, New Jersey, and decided to make concessions. Many of the rebels were allowed to leave the army, and Washington asked the governors of the various states for money to deal with the grievances of the soldiers. The Pennsylvania line quieted down. But when another mutiny broke out in the New Jersey line, involving only a few hundred, Washington ordered harsh measures. He saw the possibility of "this dangerous spirit" spreading. Two of "the most atrocious offenders" were court-martialed on the spot and sentenced to be shot. Their fellow mutineers, some of them weeping as they did so, carried out the executions.

Howard Fast tells the story of the mutinies in his novel *The Proud and the Free* (Little Brown, 1950). Drawing from the classic historical account by Carl Van Doren, *Mutiny in January*, Fast dramatizes the class conflict inside the Revolutionary Army. One of his characters, the mutinous soldier Jack Maloney, recalls the words of Thomas Paine and the promise of freedom and says, yes, he is willing to die for that freedom, but "not for that craven Congress in Philadelphia, not for the fine Pennsylvania ladies in their silks and satins, not for the property of every dirty lord and

fat parroon in New Jersey."

When the War for Independence was won, class conflict continued in the new nation. The Founding Fathers fashioned a Constitution that would enable a strong federal government to suppress any rebellion by its unruly children. The new government would serve the interests of slaveholders, merchants, manufacturers, land speculators, while offering white males with some property a degree of influence, but not dominance, in the political process.

The history of the next 200 years is a history of control of the nation by one class, as the government, solidly in the hands of the rich, gave huge gifts of the nation's resources to the railroad magnates, the industrialists, and the shipowners. Historian Charles Beard, in the first years of the Great Depression, wrote caustically about "The Myth of Rugged Individualism," noting that industrial and financial leaders were not rugged enough to make their own way in the world, and had to be subsidized, and silver-spoon-fed, by the government.

When the ruling class (I've tried to avoid that old-fashioned radical expression, but it expresses a simple, strong truth) faced resistance, as it did all through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, by slaves, working people, farmers, and especially by the indigenous people of the continent, it called upon the government to use its armies and its courts to put down the ingrates.

Political leaders have traditionally become annoyed when someone dared to suggest that we live in a class society, dominated by the moneyed interests. Thus, when Eugene V. Debs, opposing World War 1, told an assembly in Ohio that "the master class has always brought a war, and the subject class has always fought the battle," this could not be tolerated. He was sentenced to ten years in prison, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, in the spirit of patriotic liberalism, affirmed the sentence for a unanimous Supreme Court.

Today, even the slightest suggestion that we are a nation divided by class brings angry reactions. When Gore talked ominously about "big money" (while pocketing huge amounts of it for his campaign) it was enough for Bush to become indignant. Surely he need not worry. Gore and Lieberman represent no threat to the rule of the super-rich.

A New York Times reporter, in a rare excursion into "the other America," spoke to people in Cross City, Florida, about the election and concluded: "People here look at Al Gore and George W Bush and see two men born to the country club, men whose family histories jingle with silver spoons. They appear, to people here, just the same."

Cindy Lamb, a cashier at a Chevron filling station, and wife of a construction worker, told the reporter: "I don't think they think about people like us, and if they do care, they're not going to do anything for us. Maybe if they had ever lived in a two bedroom trailer, it would be different."

An African American woman, a manager at McDonald's, who makes slightly more than the minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour, said, about Bush and Gore: "I don't even pay attention to those two, and all my friends say the same. My life won't change."

The election soon will be over, and whether Gore or Bush is in the White House, the same class that has always dominated our political and economic systems in the United States will still be in power. Whoever is President, we will face the same challenge the day after the voting: how to bring together the class of have-nots-a great majority of the country-into the kind of social movement that in the past has gained some measure of justice and has made the people in charge tremble at the prospect of "class warfare."

Such a movement, responding to the great challenges of the new century, could bring democracy alive.

Howard Zinn is loved for good reason. Common sense writing; a master at historical approach; and belief in only bottom-up change. His most well-known book is *Peoples' History of the United States*. It has sold over 400,000 copies with no advertising push. That book, besides Noam Chomsky books, is the bane of right-liberals everywhere because of its truth. He also has many other books, and collections of essays. Much more from him next issue!!!!!!

Excerpts from Chapter 5 of Rogue States by Noam Chomsky -South End Press-2000

The potential scale of the Colombia Plan is suggested by regional US military projects. The Salvadoran press reports a US-Salvadoran agreement, still to be ratified by the Salvadoran legislature, to allow the US Navy to use a Salvadoran airport as a "Forward Operating Location" (FOL), in addition to US Air Force FOLs in the Ecuadoran port city of Manta and the Dutch colonies of Aruba and Curacao. The intergovernmental agreements reportedly allow the US total discretion over aircraft and weaponry, with no local inspection or control permitted. Ecuadoran military experts express concern that the Manta military base is perhaps being prepared for "eventual Kosovo-style aerial bombardments, ... an air war waged from bases used by the United States in the region, and from sea, in which planes and missiles would play a major role."²⁵

The Colombia Plan is officially justified in terms of the "drug war,"²⁶ a claim taken seriously by few competent analysts. The US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) reports that "all branches of government" in Colombia are involved in "drug-related corruption." In November 1998, US Customs and DEA inspectors found 415 kg of cocaine and 6 kg of heroin in a Colombian Air Force plane that had landed in Florida, leading to the arrest of several Air Force officers and enlisted personnel.²⁷ Other observers too have reported the heavy involvement of the military in narcotrafficking, and the US military has also been drawn in. The wife of Colonel James Hiett pleaded guilty to conspiracy to smuggle heroin from Colombia to New York, and shortly after, it was reported that Colonel Hiett himself, who is in charge of US troops that trained Colombian security forces in "counternarcotics operations," was "expected to plead guilty" to charges of complicity.

The paramilitaries openly proclaim their reliance on the drug business. "The leader of the paramilitaries [Carlos Castano] acknowledged last week in a television interview that the drug trade provided 70 percent of the group's funding," correspondent John Donnelly reported in March 2000. This was the first appearance on Colombian TV of Castano, who heads the largest and most brutal of the paramilitary organizations. He claimed to command a force of 11,200 men "financed by extortion and income from 30,000 hectares of coca fields in Norte de Santander." But "the US-financed attack stays clear of the areas controlled by paramilitary forces," Donnelly observes, as have many others. The targets of the Colombia Plan are guerrilla forces based on the peasantry and calling for internal social change, which would interfere with integration of Colombia into the global system on the terms that the US demands: dominated by elites linked to US power interests that are accorded privileged access to Colombia's valuable resources, including oil - quite possibly a significant factor behind the Colombia Plan.

In standard US terminology, the FARC forces are "narcoguerrillas," a useful concept as a cover for counterinsurgency, but one that has been disputed by knowledgeable observers. It is agreed - and FARC leaders say - that they rely for funding on coca production, which they tax, as they tax other businesses. But "the guerrillas are something different from the traffickers," says Klaus Nyholm, who runs the UN Drug Control Program, "which has agents throughout the drug-producing regions. He believes the local FARC fronts to be "quite autonomous." In some areas "they are not involved at all" in coca production, and in others "They ac-

tively tell the farmers not to grow [coca]." Andean drug specialist Ricardo Vargas describes the role of the guerrillas as "primarily focused on taxation of illicit crops." They have called for "a development plan for the peasants" that would "allow eradication of coca on the basis of alternative crops." "That's all we want," their leader Marulanda has publicly announced, as have other spokespersons.

But let us put these matters aside and consider a few other questions. Why do peasants in Colombia grow coca, not other crops? The reasons are understood, "Peasants grow coca and poppies," Vargas observes, "because of the crisis in the agricultural sector of Latin American countries, escalated by the general economic crisis in the region." Peasants began colonizing the Colombian Amazon in the 1950s, he writes, "following the violent displacement of peasants by large landholders," and they found that coca was "the only product that was both profitable and easy to market." Pressures on the peasantry substantially increased as "ranchers, investors, and legal commercial farmers have created and strengthened private armies" - the paramilitaries - that "serve as a means to violently expropriate land from indigenous people, peasants, and settlers," with the result that "traffickers now control much of Colombia's valuable land." The counterinsurgency battalions armed and trained by the US do not attack traffickers, Vargas reports, but "have as their target the weakest and most socially fragile link of the drug chain: the production by peasants, settlers, and indigenous people." The same is true of the chemical and biological weapons that Washington employs, used experimentally in violation of manufacturers' specifications, and over the objections of the Colombian government and agricultural associations. These measures multiply the "dangers to the civilian population, the environment, and legal agriculture." They destroy "legal food crops like yucca and bananas, water sources, pastures, livestock, and all the crops included in crop substitution programs," including those of well-established Church-run development projects that have sought to develop alternatives to coca production. There are also uncertain but potentially severe effects "on the fragile tropical rainforest environment."

Traditional US programs, and the current Colombia Plan as well, primarily support the social forces that control the government and the military / paramilitary system, and that have largely created the problems by their rapacity and violence. The targets are the usual victims.

There are other factors that operate to increase coca production. Colombia was once a major wheat producer. That was undermined in the 1950s by "Food for Peace" aid, a program that provided taxpayer subsidies to US agribusiness and induced other countries to "become dependent on us for food" (Senator Hubert Humphrey, representing Midwest agricultural exporters), with counterpart funds for US client states, which they commonly used for military spending and counterinsurgency. A year before President Bush announced the "drug war" with great fanfare (once again), the international coffee agreement was suspended under US pressure, on grounds of "fair trade violations." The result was a fall of prices of more than 40 percent within two months for Colombia's leading legal export.

..... In comparison to the 400,000 deaths caused by tobacco every year in the United States, drug-related deaths reached a record 16,000 in 1997. Furthermore, only 4 out of 10 addicts who needed treatment received it, according to a White House report. These facts raise further questions about the motives for the drug war. The seriousness of concern over use of drugs was illustrated again when a House Committee was considering the Clinton Colombia Plan. It rejected an amendment proposed by California Democrat Nancy Pelosi calling for funding of drug demand-reduction services. It is well known that treatment and prevention are far more effective than forceful measures. A widely cited Rand Corporation study sponsored by the US Army and Office of National Drug Control Policy found that funds spent on domestic drug treatment were 23

times as effective as "source country control" (Clinton's Colombia Plan), 11 times as effective as interdiction, and 7 times as effective as domestic law enforcement.

But the inexpensive and effective path will not be followed. Rather, the "drug war" is crafted to target poor peasants abroad and poor people at home; by the use of force, not constructive measures to alleviate the problems that allegedly motivate it, at a fraction of the cost.

While Clinton's Colombia Plan was being formulated, senior administration officials discussed a proposal by the Office of Management and Budget to take \$ 100 million from the \$1.3 billion then planned for Colombia, to be used for treatment for US addicts. There was near unanimous opposition, particularly from "drug czar" General Barry McCaffrey, and the proposal was dropped. In contrast, when Richard Nixon - in many respects the last liberal president - declared a drug war in 1971, two-thirds of the funding went to treatment, which reached record numbers of addicts; there was a sharp drop in drug-related arrests and the number of federal prison inmates. Since 1980, however, "the war on drugs has shifted to punishing offenders, border surveillance, and fighting production at the source countries. 49 One consequence is an enormous increase in drug-related (often victimless) crimes and an explosion in the prison population, reaching levels far beyond that in any industrial country and possibly a world record, with no detectable effect on availability or price of drugs.

Such observations, hardly obscure, raise the question of what the drug war is all about. It is recognized widely that it fails to achieve its stated ends, and the failed methods are then pursued more vigorously, while effective ways to reach the stated goals are rejected. It is therefore only reasonable to conclude that the "drug war," cast in the harshly punitive form implemented in the past 20 years, is achieving its goals, not failing. What are these goals? A plausible answer is implicit in a comment by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, one of the few senators to pay close attention to social statistics, as the latest phase of the "drug war" was declared. By adopting these measures, he observed, "we are choosing to have an intense crime problem concentrated among minorities." Criminologist Michael Tonry concludes that "the war's planners knew exactly what they were doing." What they were doing is, first, getting rid of the "superfluous population," the "disposable people" - "desecrables," as they are called in Colombia, where they are eliminated by "social cleansing"; and second, frightening everyone else, not an unimportant task in a period when a domestic form of "structural adjustment" is being imposed, with significant costs for the majority of the population.

"While the War on Drugs only occasionally serves and more often degrades public health and safety," a well-informed and insightful review concludes, "it regularly serves the interests of private wealth: interests revealed by the pattern of winners and losers, targets and non-targets, well-funded and underfunded," in accord with "the main interests of US foreign and domestic policy generally" and the private sector that "has overriding influence on policy."

One may debate the motivations, but the consequences in the US and abroad seem reasonably clear.

Noam Chomsky (2000)

An Interview with FARC commander Simon Trinidad

by Garry Leech

Garry M. Leech is the publisher of Colombia Report a webbased magazine that provides analysis of the Colombian civil war. See www.colombiareport.org [reprinted from NACLA Report on the Americas a bi-monthly magazine filled with on-the-spot very informed reports Central and South America-info back page]

January 1999, newly elected Colombian president Andres Pastrana ceded an area of southern Colombia the size of Switzerland to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia FARC guerrillas as part of an agreement to begin peace talks. Although there is no cease-fire agreement while the talks are being carried out, the Colombian Armed Forces and the National Police have withdrawn all their forces from the region known as the Zona de Despeje (Clearance Zone). On June 14, Garry M. Leech traveled to Los Pozos to interview Simon Trinidad, a FARC commander and a spokesman for the guerrilla organization. Trinidad was a professor of economics at Jorge Tadeo Lozano University in Bogota for ten years before joining the FARC 16 years ago.

Why do you think the United States is focusing on the FARC and campesinos that cultivate coca here in southern Colombia instead of the paramilitaries and the narcotraffickers?

Because the FARC is the only political organization that is in opposition to the Colombian oligarchy that keeps Colombians in poverty, misery and a state of underdevelopment. [The FARC] will make better use of the natural resources and provide jobs, health care, education and housing so 40 million Colombians can live well. Who are those that are opposed to these social, economic and political changes? They are the people who monopolize the riches and resources in Colombia. A small group that monopolizes the banks, industries, mines, agriculture and international commerce, including some foreign companies, especially North Americans. For these reasons we are the principal target in the war against narcotraffickers. But we aren't narcotraffickers and the campesinos aren't narcotraffickers. If the United States government really intends to combat narcotraffickers, all the people in Colombia know where they live.... in Bogota, Medellin, Cali and Barranquilla But [the police] confront the poor campesino with repression that hurts not only the illicit crops, but also legal crops like yucca, bananas, and chickens and pigs because the fumigation kills everything.

Those responsible for making Colombia a producer of narcotics are the people who have become rich from this business: the narcotraffickers. Who else benefits? The bankers and those who distribute the drugs in the cities, universities, high schools and

discos of North America, Europe and Asia. Who else? The companies that make the chemicals for processing cocaine and heroin. These companies are German and North American.

Last year, FARC spokesman Raul Reyes claimed that the FARC could eradicate coca cultivation in the regions it controls in five years. However, there have been accusations that the FARC is forcing campesinos to grow more coca here in the Zona de Despeje.

This is the police, army and narcotrafficker version of the story. [The FARC] live in the country, and it is in the country that the coca, marijuana and the poppies have been grown for 30 years. We know the campesinos grow illicit crops out of necessity. They are obligated to cultivate illicit crops because of a government that has neglected them for many years. We have made it dear that we will not take the food out of the mouth of the poor campesinos. We will not leave them without jobs. They work with the marijuana and coca leaf because they do not have any other work. This problem is caused by the economic model of the Colombian state, and it is the state that has to fix the problem. We are the state's enemy, not their anti-narcotics police. The state has to offer people employment, honest work, and social justice to improve their lives.

What will happen if the United States Congress authorizes increased military aid to the Colombian Armed Forces and they launch an offensive against the FARC here in southern Colombia?

I don't want to think about a war in this region. War will not resolve Colombia's problems. Colombia has 18 million people living in absolute poverty, [without] electricity, water, jobs, land, education or healthcare. Another 18 million Colombians [earn] a salary that doesn't cover all their necessities. We are 36 million Colombians living poorly out of a total of 40 million. Is the war going to resolve these problems?

There is an alliance between narcotraffickers and common politicians, both Liberals and Conservatives. Also, between paramilitaries and the narcotraffickers, everybody knows this. Will the war waged against poor campesinos solve these problems? The war won't resolve the problems for the hungry and unemployed in Colombia.

Many international human rights organizations have demanded that the FARC stop recruiting children. Where does the FARC stand on this issue?

We recruit 15 year olds and up. In some fronts there may have been some younger, but [recently] we decided to send them back home. But what is the cost? During the last year a girl arrived ... 14 years old and wanting to join the guerrilla.... in March she was sent back home because the FARC's Central Command said they would return to their parents all those younger than 15. Two weeks ago I met this girl.... She said she was working in a bar from six p.m. until sunrise. I asked what she was doing and she said, 'I attend to the customers.' When I asked [how], she lowered her head and started to cry. She is a whore.

She is 14 years old. A child prostitute. She was better in the guerrillas. In the guerrillas we have dignity, respect, and we provide them with clothes, food and education. There are millions of others like this girl in Colombia who are exploited in the coal mines, the gold mines, the emerald mines, in the coca and poppy fields. They prefer that children work in the coca and poppy fields because they pay them less and they work more.

It sounds beautiful when you say that children shouldn't be guerrillas, but children are in the streets of the cities doing drugs, inhaling gasoline and glue. According to the United Nations: 41% of Colombians are children, 6.5 million children live in conditions of poverty, another 1.2 million living in absolute poverty, 30,000 live in the streets, 47% are abused by their parents, and 2.5 million work in high risk jobs. These children meet the guerrillas and they don't have parents because the military or the paramilitaries killed them, and they ask the guerrillas to let them join. We are carrying out our rule that no children younger than 15 years of age join.

--How many women are there in the FARC, and what happens when they become pregnant?

Approximately 30% of the guerrillas are women, and the number is increasing. Women guerrillas are treated the same as the men. Some FARC units have female commanders; the FARC office in San Vicente is run by a female. Some women have relationships with male guerrillas, and we provide contraceptives. But some do get pregnant. If they don't have an abortion, they have to leave the guerrillas.

IWW ORGANIZERS Chin Poo, Hing Chan,
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A 10 Page monthly newsletter -\$22 subscriptions. Web subs a bit cheaper. Doug Henwood is a damn genius when it comes to economics. Really. And an excellent writer. His book (among others) *Wall Street* may be too thick or specific for most of us (say as compared to *One World Ready or Not* by William Grieder) but if you're like me, you want to know the meaty and flighty ins and outs of capitalistic economics and how the Fed, the banks etc. are looking at stats, profit prediction, debt growth, the big picture. He gives it to us, even if I can't understand all of it. The Gini Index is suddenly important to me no shit. Also, he is no poo-pooing stay at home. He like Cockburn, was excited as hell about the Seattle shutdown. The LBO's web site has a GREAT links page. If you got that computer access, please go to it immediately!! If you need to write anything that needs any research, it's a good first check. Links to all the gov't sites and left org's..and some right think tanks. Henwood may be a marxist, but he writes about organizing more as a A/syn-dicalist.
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Corruptions of Empire -Verso Press

The Golden Age is in Us -Verso Press

For the past ten years, his writing, his caustic on-target and factual attacks have gotten me through a lot of teeth-gnashing bewildered times such as the beginning of the bombing of Serbia that all the 'liberals' lined up for. He's there for us, and never goes hypocrite middle----- ever. (ts)

Globalization & Instability

from Z MAGAZINE SEPT 1999

The Case of Colombia

By Edward S. Herman & Cecilia Zarate-Laun

It has been an important ideological premise of the U.S.-organized New World Order that globalization is a very positive thing that "brings us all together," whereas ethnic strife and "balkanization" are regressive tendencies that conflict with globalization. A recent expression of this view was President Clinton's April 7 pronouncement that the bombing of Yugoslavia was to advance this benevolent globalization process by fighting off the ugly forces of separatism and ethnic violence.

Globalization Generates Conflict

But this counter-poising of globalization and ethnic strife is extremely misleading, as globalization has been a primary cause of fragmentation, ethnic strife, and other forms of violence. (In his April 7 address, Clinton acknowledged that globalization has created problems, which call for U.S. "leadership" in straightening things out, as in Kosovo.) Globalization has been "bringing us together," but under the rule of transnational capital and the governments and international institutions that serve it, and in a highly undemocratic manner. Where that rule is resisted violence occurs, frequently with the active support of the leaders of the globalization process. Globalization has been notorious for its income polarization effects, with vast numbers mired in poverty even as the world's rich become much richer; and as Oxfam noted in a 1995 report on poverty, "deepening poverty is one of the main driving forces behind the civil conflicts which are creating unprecedented numbers of refugees."

The ethnic strife in the most recent focus of attention, the Balkans, is in large measure a derivative of the forces of globalization, to whose account we may include: the integration of Yugoslavia into the global market in the 1970s and 1980s; its weakened economic condition from the recession of the early 1980s and then the brutal IMI, structural adjustment plan imposed on it; and its active dismantlement encouraged by Germany, Austria, and the U.S. in the 1990s in pursuit of their regional and global geopolitical interests. The breakup of the Soviet Union and the West's encouragement of rapid privatization and shock therapy in Russia, and the integration of China into the global market, have resulted in catastrophic conditions in the former and increasing chaos in the latter.

The devastating effects on Africa of its global economic links and IMF and World Bank policies has also been an important illustration of the close connection between globalization and instability. Peruvian analyst Oswaldo De Rivero even argues that globalization and IMF-World Bank policies have virtually created an important national category that he labels "chaotic ungovernable entities," with some 23 of them extending from Angola to Bolivia to Tajikistan now identifiable and their rapid proliferation and regressive tendencies making a mockery of the phrase "emerging economies" ("States in Ruin, Conflicts Without End," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, April 1999).

Violence to Facilitate Globalization

As regards the active support of violence by the globalizing leaders and institutions, we may recall the U.S. sponsorship of the National Security States in Latin America, Suharto in Indonesia, Mobutu in Zaire, and Marcos in the Philippines. These regimes not only killed and terrorized on a large scale, they also generated an enormous flow of mainly internal

refugees, pushed off the land for the benefit of foreign as well as domestic agro-export, oil, mining, and timber interests. In Brazil alone, church sources estimated some seven million peasants evicted from the land in the years of military rule, and large numbers were similarly treated (with many killed) in other parts of the empire (including pre-Sandinista Nicaragua) to make way for the important, increasingly global, interests. These victimized people sometimes resisted and caused "instability" and "ethnic conflict" that had to be dealt with by the globalizing forces of law and order. "Stability" for the globalizers means no obstacle or resistance to their own radical destabilizing operations; the victims should accept their displacement, removal, and other injuries without complaint.

This same process goes on today, even in the nominally "democratic" provinces. In many cases, years of class cleansing by U.S.-supported rulers such as Pinochet have left the countries with democracies in complete thrall to the powerful-labor weakened and fearful; concentrated control of business and the media; dependence on foreign capital, global financial markets, and the IMF-and thus servants of neoliberal policies and interests. And very often the victims respond, calling for state and global action in the interest of "stability."

For example, Bolivia, often portrayed as a model of reform under Jeffrey Sachs's tutelage and IMF structural adjustment programs (SAPs) beginning in 1985, illustrates a commonly encountered sequence of policy actions, resultant devastating human conditions, conflict, and responsive repression (assisted by the United States). Privatization of the tin mines and other public assets, cutbacks in subsidies to the poor and small farmers, restrictive macro policies, a shift to agro-exports under IMF-U.S. pressure and need to service a growing external debt, generated serious unemployment, a fall in the real incomes of a large majority, and the familiar spurt of malnutrition and growth of the informal market. Many small farmers unable to compete in traditional crops without subsidies or protection in a global market moved into coca leaf cultivation. This rational economic choice has been increasingly attacked under U.S.-sponsored anti-drug programs that have used chemical warfare and military campaigns.

Thus, having destroyed the livelihoods of large numbers of Bolivians, and afforded them no survival alternative to coca leaf cultivation, the United States is now spending large sums directly and through a militarized Bolivian state to crush the coca leaf producers by violence. A Banzer government plan for the Chapare area of coca leaf cultivation calls for the relocation of 20,000 families, many of whom moved there after the 1985 SAP closed the tin mines. The hope is that agro-businesses like Chiquita can be induced into the area to replace the peasants. But the peasant families are refusing to move in a conflict clearly related to the interests of a tiny local elite and the United States and its globalizing program, surely not those of the Bolivian people (see the interview on Bolivia with George Ann Potter, Council on Hemispheric Affairs, Washington Report on the Hemisphere, July 1, 1999).

As another example, in the case of Mexico's corrupt democracy, a Salinas and Zedillo can privatize everything in sight, alter Article 27 of the Mexican constitution to end protection of community land rights, terminate subsidies to small farmers and increase them to agro-farmers, and open up timber areas that were a commons of indigenous communities (and protection against flooding) to timber giants like Boise Cascade. These anti-peopic actions, along with the effects of NAFTA, have produced another burst of refugees from the land, into Mexico City and across the U.S. border. It has also led to a series of outbreaks of indigenous violence, including but by no means limited to the Zapatista revolt. These conflicts have been closely

and directly related to the annexation and globalization of Mexico (see John Ross, *The Annexation of Mexico, Common Courage*, 1997).

Of course both Mexican globalization and the Mexican government's steady deployment of state violence have been actively aided by the United States. Clinton has more closely embraced Zedillo in the face of new evidence of corruption and fraud and a more aggressive Mexican counterinsurgency policy in dealing with rural grievances. This U.S. support of both a globalization process that generates revolt and the instruments of state terror that are designed to keep that response in check recalls an important Brazilian church document of the 1960s, which noted that the National Security State was needed because the merciless economic policies being carried out by the Brazilian military government (with enthusiastic transnational corporate participation and U.S. political support) were "generating a revolution that did not previously exist." State terror was needed to cope with the "instability" produced by the already operative "growth with injustice" model. Then, and as regards Mexican state terror and its role today, the U.S. mainstream media avert their eyes.

Terror and Globalization in Colombia

Even more dramatic than Bolivia or Mexico today is the case of Colombia, where political killings of peasant and labor leaders, teachers, journalists, priests, nuns, lawyers, women rights leaders, human rights workers, and citizens, carried out mainly by the government and its affiliated paramilitary arms, were estimated by human rights watchers at over 3,800 in 1998. (Over half the trade union leaders murdered in the entire world in 1997 were located in Colombia.) This is a far larger figure than the number of Albanians killed in Kosovo prior to the beginning of NATO bombings in March. The number of internal refugees in Colombia is reckoned at some 1.5 million, also vastly greater than the pre-NATO bombing refugee numbers in Kosovo.

Unworthy victims. But, like Turkey and Suharto's Indonesia, as well as Bolivia and Mexico, Colombia is an increasingly important part of the global economic order, its oil and mineral wealth have attracted the interest of important global economic players, and its government, army and paramilitary forces are allied with and kill in the interest of those important players. These victims therefore fall into the "unworthy" category, attract little international attention, and can be killed and dispossessed on a large scale without indignant outcries from Susan Sontag or platitudes on the importance of each individual by Vaclav Havel. These moralists reserve their preachings for worthy victims.

The unworthiness of Colombia's ordinary citizens can also be read from the fact that, as with Mexico, Turkey, and Suharto's Indonesia, the Colombian government is actively aided by the United States; in this case, with several hundred military advisers, joint training exercises, a strong CIA and DEA presence, and \$290 million in military aid, making Colombia the third largest recipient of such aid (after Israel and Egypt). This funding is about to be sharply increased as the Clinton administration further militarizes the "drug war," the press reporting a proposed \$1 billion allocation to the Colombia struggle against "narco-terrorism." But in fact this will go to an army that is itself tied to the drug trade, and that directly or indirectly has been guilty of human rights violations that will bear comparison with any in the world.

Obstacles to "progress." Throughout Colombia indigenous tribes, peasants, and small miners stand in the way of oil drilling, agro-business, and large scale mining which cause their dispossession and severe environmental damage. Occidental Petroleum has had a long-standing dispute with the U'wa Indian tribe that opposes their drilling on Indian lands. Exxon's giant El Cerrejon coal mine, and other nearby mines in Venezuela, have had injurious effects on a half dozen local Indian tribes that have opposed

their operations. The Choco area in the Northwest part of Colombia below Panama is rich in minerals and oil and contains one of the world's last pristine rain forests. It is being rapidly opened to mining, oil, and timber exploitation, and pipelines, ports, railroads, a canal, and the last 65 miles of the Pan American Highway are being pushed forward to bring this region into the global market. Free trade zones are in the planning stage for the Choco area. The local peasants are resisting, and the paramilitaries, army, and other drug warriors have been quietly pushing them out, often by extreme terror (a preferred paramilitary method is cutting people alive in pieces with chain saws, impelling a flight in which everything is left behind).

In Southern Bolivar there is a gold mine long coveted by the transnational mining companies as it produces first quality gold in an open pit location. Local peasants have been exploiting this mine for 40 years, along with miners organized in a union and working for a local company. The peasant and union leaders in this area have been murdered and in 1998 some 10,000 farmers and peasants were driven out by paramilitaries, who were funded by gold mining companies and protected by the Colombian army.

These Colombian conflicts and "instability" are closely tied to the new global economic order. Colombia, like Bolivia and other Latin American countries, has been subjected to a SAP that called for enlarged exports of primary goods to generate hard currency. This program helped force privatization and liberalization of trade and investment, encouraging an influx of foreign capital. The United State enthusiastically backed these "reforms," which benefited their transnationals. But these policies have threatened and damaged indigenous communities and their ecological systems, and helped produce terrorist responses; the main oil pipeline in Colombia has been bombed over 500 times, and the regions of oil development are notorious for death squads and other human rights abuses.

Anti-narcoterrorist death squads. The situation in Colombia is somewhat reminiscent of that in El Salvador and Guatemala in the 1980s, where the U.S.-aided armies killed and produced refugees on a truly massive scale, with the help of paramilitaries (death squads) closely affiliated with the army. It is recognized by all human rights groups, and has even been acknowledged in the State Department's own human rights reports, that most of the killing in Colombia is done by army-affiliated and protected rightwing paramilitaries. As in El Salvador and Guatemala, the use of death squads allows the army to do much of its dirty work by proxy, making it appear that the army and government are not in the business of mass murder. It is also widely recognized that the Colombian paramilitaries and army are TEX heavily involved in the drug trade; the conservative *London Economist* even alleged that the drug traffickers protected by the paramilitaries "are far deeper into drugs [than the guerrillas]-and the DEA knows it" (February 20, 1999). But this has not prevented the United States from aiding the Colombian army in the name of fighting a drug war.

In effect, the United States supports a "narco-army" and "narcoparamilitaries" (death squads) to combat "narcoguerrillas." The guerrillas do receive enormous amounts of money coming from the drug trade and they kill on a large scale; some 14 percent of total hu-

man rights violations reported by Colombian NGOs are attributed to the guerrillas. But that leaves 84 percent to the paramilitaries and 2 percent to the army. Nevertheless, the United States has aligned itself completely with the dominant killers and dominant participants in the drug trade and leaves their drug terrain alone.

U.S. aid to Colombia has been earmarked for specific regions of the country such as the Amazon and Orinoco basins that happen to be the areas of influence of the rebel Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), while largely avoiding the northern areas of the country where the drug trade routes are protected by paramilitaries closely allied with drug-traffickers and members of the Colombian army. Exempting and supplying arms to an important segment of the drug trade suggests that, as with anticommunism in the past, the drug war rationale covers over the pursuit of larger objectives, that can be read from what the army and paramilitaries do—remove, kill, and silence the large segments of the rural population that stand in the way of the exploitation of Colombia's resources.

U.S.- and TNC-sponsored militarization. The Colombian army and police have long been trained and supplied arms and intelligence by the United States, and that close cooperation has been enhanced recently, in 7A 0 eluding "a series of electronic surveillance and radar stations built and staffed by American technicians ... maintained around Colombia as part of the enhanced cooperation strategy" (NYT, July 14, 1999). The Colombian army is proud of its close connection with the U.S. army, one of its leaders, General Manuel Jose Bonett, stating recently that "we're fighting this war on behalf of the United States" (Washington Post, May 25, 1998). It is also the transnational corporations' (TNC's) army. On September 11, 1996, the London Guardian disclosed that British Petroleum (BP), the largest investor in Colombia, had secretly rented 150 officers and 500 soldiers of the Colombian army to serve its "security" interests, and had brought in British counterinsurgency professionals to train the Colombians. BP also exchanged intelligence information with them, some of which was used in tracking and killing local "subversives." The other oil companies in Colombia have also cultivated the army and police and hired paramilitaries and foreign mercenaries to protect their oil pipelines.

The United States has a long and terrible history of supporting military governments and regimes of terror in Latin America. This used to be rationalized on the grounds of a Soviet-communist threat, as in Guatemala in 1954, Brazil in 1964, and El Salvador and Nicaragua in the 1980s. Although this was a fraud and cover for the desire to assure a completely amenable and investor-friendly environment, it was effective in making active U.S. backing of the institutionalization of state terror acceptable to mainstream intellectuals and media. It was even claimed that we supported and trained military personnel in the interest of democracy and human rights, an Orwellian claim that was not challenged in the mainstream even as ten democratic governments were displaced by our military trainees in the 1960s, with our tacit or open support, and even after Amnesty International reported in the 1970s that Latin America—the U.S. backyard—had become the world's focal point of torture and "disappearances."

Normalizing U.S. aid to Colombian state terror. It is a testimonial to the power of rationalization, and to the willingness of the mainstream media to suppress information on—and normalize—U.S.-supported terror, that the United States can once again escalate aid to a military regime that is committing Guatemala type and scale human rights atrocities,

do this at the same time as it engages in "humanitarian intervention" in the Balkans, and while Clinton humbly apologizes for U.S. connivance in earlier military violence in Guatemala, and come off with a halo of virtue. Drug czar Barry McCaffrey can assert without contradiction that it is the guerrillas that are making "a criminal attack on Colombian democracy" and pretend that U.S. support of the Colombian army and paramilitaries is favorable to democracy, without eliciting any mainstream critical analyses or references to the scandalously contrary record of history.

Colombian human rights workers documented 1,332 killed in 201 separate massacres in 1998, in addition to another 2,500 more individual assassinations. Many of these massacres were extremely dramatic and immensely newsworthy, with heads cut off and hung on poles, and numerous flights of hundreds of terrorized women and children. It would have been possible to arouse a great deal of public indignation if reported here, but these were people standing in the way of progress, killed by agents supported by the U.S. government. Accordingly, the media have been busy elsewhere.

The flurry of articles on Colombia in the New York Times in July focused mainly on fights between rebels and the army and U.S. "concern" and involvement in the interest of controlling the drug trade (July 12, 14, 17-19, 27, 29). Larry Rohter's apologetic frame is "Colombia's war against the twin plagues of drugs and guerrillas" ("With U.S. training, Colombia Mends War on Rebels and Drugs," NYT, July 29, 1999), which downgrades and even legitimizes the mass killing by the paramilitary death squads, who are allies and agents of the U.S.-supported Colombia army. The problematic of this attack on drugs, such as army involvement in the business, the discriminatory locus of attacks on drug cultivation, and the possibility that the narco-terrorism focus is misdirected and even a cover for other ends are not raised. Neither this nor any other article in the recent series mentioned the penetration of Colombia by the oil companies and their conflicts with the indigenous peoples.

Although paramilitaries and army have carried out the great bulk of Colombian killings, the Times had no article (or paragraph) on the organization, funding, and death dealing activities of these forces. It did, however, devote a full article to "A Guerrilla's Half Century in Colombia's Mountains" (July 19), which quoted an unnamed diplomat on guerrilla leader Tirofijo's "Pol Pot" qualities and gave numbers supplied by the Colombian government on people he executed or who were missing to Tirofijo's account. The paper did not mention, nor did it cover in 1998, any of the 201 massacres listed by human rights groups.

There is also no account in this Times series of the history of U.S. military aid and its consequences for democracy and human rights. By ignoring this history, giving unwarranted credence to the drug war rationale, demonizing the narco-guerrillas (as while treating gently the U.S.-supported mass killers, and reserving its attention and indignation for worthy victims (e.g., Kosovo Albanians, people executed by Tirofijo's forces), the Times once again serves as a propaganda agent of the state. At this historical juncture it helps engineer consent to U.S. support of another round of very serious state terror aimed at crushing any resistance to the ongoing process of globalization without justice.

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Edward Herman is an economist and media analyst; Cecilia Zarate-Laun is co-founder and program director of the Colombia Support Network.
Rattlesnake#1-page 137

-Some media reports.....on Columbia

SF Examiner-Sept 4/00 AP

Page A-9—article about rebel violence in Columbia...no mention of recent military assaults...no mention of total dead over 80% by military and paramilitaries...says (contrary to other recent mainstream articles that admit the paramilitaries deal 75% of drug trade) "Clinton's visit to the war-torn South American country was meant to support President Andres Pastrana's fight against drug traffickers and leftist rebels who protect drugs crops. (!!!) U.S. and Colombian officials hope the \$1.3 billion in aid will weaken the rebels and push them towards peace by cutting into revenue from taxes the rebels levy on cocaine." (!) Then, "But some critics have said the aid is skewed toward the Colombian military, leaving police increasingly vulnerable."

TIME 3/6/00 "There's just one problem: Pastrana, is more popular on the Potomac than in Colombia, where unemployment is at 20% and the nation is enduring its worst recession in 70 years. According to a Human Rights Watch report released last week, the Colombian army is still fighting guerrillas with the help of some 5,000 paramilitary thugs "responsible for gross human rights violations." Though the White House publicly insists its aid will fight drugs and not guerrillas, Clinton aides privately admit it will be impossible to separate the two in many future battles ..."

TIME 3/6/00

"Clinton administrations aid package calls for 30 new Sikorsky UH-60 Black hawk helicopters, at \$10 million each, and 22 Bell UH-1 Hueys, outfitted with new engines and other improvements for \$1.5 million each. Colombian pilots will travel to Florida to learn to fly the jet-powered Blackhawks, which cost about \$1,500 an hour to fly. Maintenance is very costly—When Colombia got 12 old Hueys in 97, for example, each could be flown less than 10 hours before it needed a major required overhaul. Only two of them are flying two months after their arrival. Mexico got 73 used Hueys in 97, never got more than a dozen airborne at a time...and in Sept 99 they returned them to the US"

from **FAIR** Burnishing Images

Considering that the U.S. government just gave Colombia's government \$1.3 billion, one might expect more coverage of the Colombian military's recent killing of six schoolchildren, who according to witnesses were doing nothing more than hiking. But the story got little play in the U.S. press, and much of what did appear played down the atrocity. The Chicago Tribune (8/16/00), for example, ran a short piece sourced entirely to the Colombian government that was headlined "6 Kids Die in Crossfire Between Troops, Rebels"; the paper never followed up on survivors' accounts that no guerrillas were present. The Washington Post (8/18/00) ran an AP story on the incident under the headline, "Colombian Army Struggles to Burnish Image."

THIS IS YOUR WAR ON DRUGS

From an interview with a soldier in the Colombian military published in the Jan/Feb 2000 issue of the Index on Censorship. Last July, at President Clinton's behest, Congress authorized a \$1.3 billion aid package for the Colombian government that includes military equipment, intelligence resources, and hundreds of U. S. military advisers.

What are your memories of your first days in the army?

We were trained in counter-guerilla tactics. They told us that anyone involved in human rights was a guerilla. Anyone who was a peasant was also a guerilla as far as we were concerned. They trained us to kill. Whenever you went into operations, you took a rifle de caudre. What's that?

An extra rifle. If there were operations but no action, you killed a peasant and you gave them the rifle and dressed them in camouflage. Whenever there was a military target and you didn't kill anyone, you had to take back a body. That's how we did it.

Whom did you kill?

Whomever. Where there as fighting we were there in support, and when it as all over we would stay in the mountains as infiltrators or ambushers. The last time we killed an old man, a hunchback. We were after a guerilla commander. We couldn't find him. Se we grabbed an old man who had the same surname on his ID card. My lieutenant told me to kill him if I had the guys. I said: "If I have to, I have to." But he gave the order to another soldier.

And reported that he had been killed in combat?

Of course. You set up simulated crossfire in case there is an investigation. You set off an alarm, four or five shots from each soldier. It's a sham, but the lieutenant gets a promotion.

Promotion depends on the number of bodies you bring back?

Yes. My first experience of the way things worked was when we were in a joint operation with Tayrona battalion, which I think is from the Magdalena. There had been fighting in the Sierra Nevada, fierce, bloody combat with the guerillas' supply routes, working with the paramilitaries. The guerillas were starting to die. They were really hungry and worn down. We went up when the fighting was over, then retreated, and the paramilitaries went in with the battalion. They massacred the peasants.

The army knows who the paramilitaries are?

Of course. They go on maneuvers with the battalion. They borrow the battalion's cars to travel to other regions.

Is there a paramilitary base in the Magdalena?

Lucas Gnecco, the governor of Cesar, has his base there. Everything in Cesar is run by Gnecco. He finances the paramilitaries, gets uniforms for the battalion, and distributes other stuff to them.

How do you know this?

I got friendly with a first lieutenant who had a lot of information. Gnecco was involved in the death of a human-rights journalist who had information that he was financing the paramilitaries in Valledupar. I overheard two colonels in the battalion talking about it. One day two paramilitaries arrived and took a couple of pistols that had belonged to the guerilla we'd captured. They needed guns that couldn't be traced because there was an investigation going on. They stayed in the battalion for seven days, training us. We were always chatting with them, asking them what they had done. They offered us money and said that as soon as we left the military we could join them.

How much does a paramilitary earn?

At the start they earn about 340,000 pesos (around \$160). A really fearless killer will get promoted to leader, and his wages will go up. When the paramilitaries get a tip-off, they travel together in the battalion's transport, the army on one side, them on the other. The paramilitary I was talking to asked why I didn't work with them. He knew that I was from the local barrios and that I would know where the guerilla commanders and collaborators lived. He said: "Why don't you earn some good money, you idiot?"

And how does the paramilitaries' training continue?

I don't know where they do their training; the information is closely guarded. They always take reservists because then they are already trained. They say that the first thing you have to do when you get there is kill someone in cold blood. It brainwashes you. It was the paramilitaries who taught us how to torture people.

What did they tell you?

To torture someone you tie them up and give them electric shocks on the tongue to make them talk. When they refuse to talk, you use those big long needles [he indicates the size of his index finger] and stab the needles through their nails. Then you strip them and make them sit on a block of ice. And when they still won't give you information, you castrate them and pour acid over them so that they end up completely disfigured. The paramilitaries have always done it. Recently, in Cesar, they burned a whole family with acid. I was in the battalion there, and a soldier told me about it. He said the son was a

guerilla and that the paramilitaries were furious with him because he had killed one of their commanders. So they went into the house and dragged out the whole family. There were three young kids, and they threw acid on all of them. Acid that turns a person black.

Who are the informers?

They are always volunteers. If you have a good tip-off you go to the battalion, and they give you camouflage and let you direct the operation. If it comes off, you get paid. The first time, the paramilitaries pay you up to 700,000 pesos (\$326). But after two months they reduce the money to about 300,000. Then you can't leave because you're implicated.

How do they talk about peasants? How do they describe them?

Union members, guerillas, human-rights workers, they are all the same for the paramilitaries. They're seen as collaborators and targets.

Are there a lot of retired military personnel in the paramilitaries?

Almost all of the leaders are retired lieutenants or sergeants, or officers. That's why they are so well trained. It's a real advantage to have someone who knows about combat and patrols.

What do you know about a massacre being planned for Barranca?

There are soldiers who have joined, volunteers; they're planning to return to Barranca, to infiltrate the area. They'll work with the guerillas for a bit and get to know what's going on so that they can hit them hard. But it will be the paramilitaries who do that. They won't involve the army.

Is there much infiltration?

Yes, whoever wants to can join the guerillas, and it's a disaster. The paramilitaries' objective is guerilla collaborators. But it's not the collaborators they'll kill, it's the ordinary people at home.

Do the officers think they are losing or winning the war?

As an army, they've lost. They themselves say so. They realize that the guerillas are really on the rise and they are effectively losing the war. There have been a lot of setbacks. Your average military man is only interested in earning a wage, nothing else. They don't feel like they used to, that they were in the army, that they loved their country.

When do you think the massacres are going to happen, the ones they're planning?

They're planned for the end of December. But we're talking about a huge massacre, one that will be felt all over the country. The one that they're going to commit in Barranca, adding it all up, is going to hit around a hundred people-they're going to go into all the barrios.

Are the people prepared? Do they know?

No, they know nothing. If I were to tell anyone, the paramilitaries would soon send someone for me.

What age are most of the paramilitaries?

Mostly young-mainly reservists. The leaders are older. They're blood-thirsty. The counter-guerilla paramilitaries carry chain saws with them, about this size [he indicates his forearm], for cutting people up. Any paramilitary that goes on operations takes one with him. They have mass graves over in Barranca.

of price tags, it is also a way to build community. Thousands of people were in Dolores Park enjoying a meal together, that was made by a collective effort. We had an outdoor kitchen set up with resourcefully fashioned tables where volunteers, old and new, chopped veggies for the stir-fry, that was cooking a few feet away. Throughout the day people who had just showed up for Soupstock would volunteer to help in the kitchen, and then became part of the larger vision of collective work producing for the community. A variety of speakers and performers transformed Dolores Park for five hours.

The music, which was organized by Ian Brennan, ranged from traditional Tibetan folk music by Tsering Wangmo and Nyimagyalpo to Diamond Dave and his son Ubi doing an acoustic song to the turntable music of DJ Disk and DJ Flare from the Invisible Skratch Pikitz, to the cello playing of Bonfire Madigan to the awesome labor songs of Folk This! to Sleater-Kinney, three women who know how to rock to the guitar playing of Vic Chesnutt to local punk band Tilt! to DC's Fugazi. Ted Gullicksen of the SF Tenants Union spoke to gentrification and landlords getting rich at the expense of families, working class, students, and many others as the days go on. Elizabeth 'Betita' Martinez of the Institute for Multiracial Justice, spoke about the use of food as a weapon in U.S. Foreign policy against Iraq. Lily from Just Act brought up the issue of youth organizing and direct action against global capitalism. Keith Savage and SF FNB members talked about the importance in taking action against the injustices around us, and holding on to our political visions. Susan Appe of Folk This! explained her thoughts of the event as following, "the goal of the revolutionary artist is to make revolution irresistible" the sight from the stage was of 10,000 conscious people getting inspired, educated and rejuvenated by the power of music and the spoken word, getting fed by community and becoming galvanized as part of our long history of struggle and as part of a whole new culture of resistance. everyone involved in soupstock that day helped both create and demonstrate what the revolution could be like."

While all this was happening on one side of the park, workshops were happening in a tent on the other side. Four women put together the first workshop titled "Smashing Privilege...Not Just Capitalism," dealing with youth organizing, white supremacy and creating alternatives. There was also a consensus workshop, and women's self-defense done by Girl Army. These workshops were not only about sharing information but also to show people how FNB works towards our vision. The workshops were also designed to empower individuals. All the workshops were put together and facilitated by people within the activist community. As our mission statement says for Soupstock, "We have come to realize, or perhaps knew all along that in order to succeed we must share our skills with one another; we must teach ourselves." We have all the skills and resources we need to succeed right here in our community. Another example of this was the pedal camp where free bike advice and assistance was offered. And if someone wanted to take a break from thinking about politics and how to bring capitalism to its knees, they could wander over to the DJ/Dance area put on by Predawn. Predawn is an amazing group who love to dance and work to keep he underground music scene alive.

All this plus the 15,000 people that are estimated to have passed through the park that day went smoothly. The crowd had all come for different reasons but once they arrived they were participating in a FNB event which values cooperation, non-violence and most of all respect. Throughout the day we heard comments from police, residents, and participants that they were impressed with FNB's style of organizing that promotes a high energy yet peaceful environment. Loretta, one of the Soupstock organizers, commented that, "the peaceful nature of the day, showed a respect for the principles of FNB on the part of thousands of people and it also demonstrated that we can build non-violent community."

In many ways this was the largest event SF FNB has organized. It was the largest sharing of free food we had ever done, the largest crowd we had ever seen, and perhaps the largest scale volunteer effort. It was over 300 people working side by side to not only spread the messages about alternatives to capi-

Food Not Bombs Turns 20 and Soupstock

Turns out 15,000--San Francisco

by Lauren Rosa and Chris Crass

On June 4th, 2000, Food Not Bombs celebrated its 20th anniversary. Thousands of people gathered for a beautiful day of music, radical politics and amazing free food. The all day free festival, Soupstock, was a celebration of FNB's social justice work as well as an example of FNB's commitment to community building, reclaiming public space and collective action. With 15,000 people coming out to celebrate and hundreds of activists working to make the day happen - Soupstock was both exhilarating and historic.

There was food in three different areas of the park, where you could get anything from stir-fry to vegan brownies to nectarines. Although some people seemed puzzled that all the food was free, it is this concept of sharing food that FNB has become known for. It is not only a way for us to directly oppose capitalism that restricts food by the use

talism and hierarchies, but also practicing those alternatives all day long.

"We were seven people who organized and delegated responsibility successfully, and in the end we had over 300 people helping out," said Kerry Levenberg, an organizer of Soupstock. "It was a direct application of what we have learned about decentralized organizing."

Soupstock wasn't an event where there were "us" and "them" it was a cooperative event where people were encouraged to take part in making the day happen, and in turn the day wouldn't have happened without the help of all the volunteers.

Long time organizer and social justice superstar, Elizabeth 'Betita' Martinez, who spoke at Soupstock commented, "I will never forget the sight of 13,000 people (by police count) in Dolores Park celebrating the 20th anniversary of Food Not Bombs with so much joy, sheer pleasure and spontaneous unity. To be part of that was to feel the Power of the People in one's veins. Yes, the crowd was overwhelmingly white, and surely not everyone was there for mostly political reasons. But to imagine a day when their numbers might combine with as many youth of color equally dedicated to social justice brought a vision to sing and dance by, to treasure in the years to come. The message went out so loud and clear—foodnot bombs, three simple words that translate: revolution."

Soupstock's significance lays not only with the sheer size of it and the enormous organizing that was involved - but with the celebration of 20 years of Food Not Bombs activity and organizing. FNB has impacted tens of thousands of activists in the United States and around the world. FNB's commitment to direct action politics and cooperative organizing combined with its passion for liberation has made it an important element of the larger social justice movement.

20 Years of Food Not Bombs - a history of breaking bread for social justice. Food Not Bombs was started in 1980 by a group of anti-nuclear activists in the Cambridge/Boston area who wanted to combine street theater and food sharing as a method to educate the public about military spending.

Sharing free food in highly visible public areas was a way of not only providing free, healthy food to folks who were hungry, but it was also a great way to get literature out and publicize protests and actions. Boston Food Not Bombs soon realized that the need for free food to people who were homeless and hungry was enormous. The number of people living on the street was increasing drastically throughout the 80's as social spending was gutted and military spending enlarged. FNB in Boston helped create important links between direct food-service providers and social justice activists. Food Not Bombs groups started in San Francisco and Long Beach in the late 80's. San Francisco Food Not Bombs began sharing free food in Golden Gate Park in 1988. FNB members were arrested on several occasions for serving without a permit - a business and homeowner association wanted to drive FNB out as part of an overall strategy of forcing out all homeless and poor people from the Haight-Asbury district famous for the Summer of Love in 67 and the spirit of the hippies. Arresting FNB proved to be a major political mistake on the part of City Hall and an enormous breakthrough for FNB. People being arrested for sharing free food made the headlines and greatly expanded the interest in the group. Food Not Bombs grew by leaps and bounds throughout the 90's.

Several factors played important roles in the growth of FNB into an international network of active local groups. The Gulf War in 91, was a wake-up call for many activists - particularly youth who had never seen such a massive display of US military power. FNB groups already active - like in Long Beach, Boston and SF - immediately dived into intense anti-war organizing. Long Beach FNB served thousands of hungry protesters at the LA Federal building week after week. SF FNB set up a 24 hour field kitchen in Civic Center and provided both food and up to the minute information about the war and anti-war activities. In other areas, activists started FNB groups as part of showing opposition to the Persian Gulf War.

East Bay Food Not Bombs - one of the longest running and most active groups - started sharing food in Berkeley during this time. FNB chapters become meeting ground for younger, newly radicalized activists to work with and learn from long-time organizers. As new groups started up in different locations, FNB activists would converge at various mass actions and events. The Peace Camp at the Nevada Test Site and Bread & Puppet in Vermont served as such places where FNBers would meet each other and cook together or the larger activist community.

In 92, the first FNB gathering was held in SF during the Columbus

Quintcentennial/500 Years of Resistance actions. Several dozen activists from around the country came together to share ideas, skills and stories. The gathering confirmed that FNB was indeed an emerging movement. As information about FNB spread through alternative publication, zines and political bands - FNB chapters started up everywhere. In cities, towns, rural areas and suburbs across the United States and around the world, FNB groups started sharing food and organizing. In 93, when the police started arresting FNBers in SF, the blatant political repression made national news and further spread the message of Food Not Bombs.

Throughout the 90's, hundreds of FNB chapters were started - some lasting a couple of months, some lasting several years, some haven't stopped since they were started. The grassroots nature of FNB's organizing style has allowed it to grow in diverse areas and it has given thousands of people opportunities to experiment with consensus decision making, non-violence as both a theory and a practice. FNBers have learned about, experimented with and utilized direct action organizing that recognizes the power that people have to act locally and globally against injustice. While FNB groups have actively protested against injustices - police brutality, toxins in our food and communities, police sweeps against poor people, the growth of corporate power and the greed of a capitalist economy - FNB is also working to develop alternative models and visions of a new society. FNB groups share free food as a demonstration that hunger and starvation are the result of production and distribution systems that benefit the rich and that there is in fact enough food for everyone. FNB groups practice anti-authoritarian, co-operative forms of decision making that promote empowerment and group responsibility as oppose to coercion and submission.

In the many different areas that FNB has operated and continues to operate over the last 20 years - we have experimented with community garden, micro-powered radio stations and needle exchange programs. We have worked at building coalitions between environmentalists, unionists, students, faith-based groups, community groups, social service providers, and all kinds of social justice activists. In Germany, the FNB groups work hard defend and expand immigrant and refugee rights, in addition to challenging capitalist consumerism. In Australia, FNB groups were taking food to striking dock workers, in addition to their regular community meals. In Canada, FNB groups have been active in massive protests of the unemployed and the poor. Throughout the US, FNB groups have worked with Earth First! and other environmentalists on countless campaigns to stop clear-cutting of redwoods and to stop toxic dumping in poor communities. FNB groups around the world have been very active in the struggle to stop police brutality and free Mumia Abu-Jamal, Leonard Peltier and all political prisoners. FNB's political outlook and organizing practice puts solidarity building at the center. FNB groups regularly work to provide food for rallies, protests, conferences and actions around many different struggles. This desire to build solidarity between groups and connect the issues has been critical work - as it both builds the larger movement and puts forward the radical vision that liberation will come about through collective struggle against all forms of oppression.

In addition to helping the larger social justice movement grow, FNB activists have also worked hard to develop FNB as a network of local groups united by politics and practice. Over the past 10 years that have been dozens of FNB gatherings - from the international gathering of 95, in SF that truly solidified FNB as a movement to regional gatherings across the US and in Europe. The gatherings are an opportunity for us to learn from one another, develop ways that we can support each other and build our critique of existing social relationships of domination while also nurturing our visions of society based on mutual aid and cooperation.

The 20 year celebration of FNB was fundamentally a celebration of the millions of hours that we have collectively invested into building Food Not Bombs - long meetings, cutting vegetables, collecting donations on a cold winter day, sharing free food at yet another protest to stop the US bombing of yet another country, the time spent making phone calls, putting on

events, organizing actions to shut down global capitalism and so many other small details - like getting spoons, finding ladles or waiting until finally someone volunteers to facilitate the meeting - these are the actions, both amazing and mundane, that have made FNB happen all of these years and at Soupstock we celebrated with great pride all of us who have made it happen these past 20 years.

For more information on starting an FNB group in your area or for ideas on improving your local group - write to East Bay FNB at 3124 Shattuck Ave. Berkeley, CA 94705 and send 3\$ for "The World Food Not Bombs Operator's Manual". FNB webpages are on the internet and San Francisco FNB can be reached through sffnb@tao.ca or pobox 40485 SF, CA 94140.

Confronting the Democratic National Convention and Working to Build a People's Movement for Justice

by Chris Crass

Going to Los Angeles for the Democratic National Convention was an amazing experience. The actions and events themselves were generally speaking, very powerful. More than the actions themselves, the questions about organizing, tactics, strategy, anti-racist practice and movement building have been profoundly challenging as well as exciting.

I had a lot of mixed feelings going down to LA from San Francisco. I grew up about half an hour from LA, in a suburb called Whittier. While living in LA, I went to lots of rallies and marches in the city - from anti-vivisection/animal liberation protests, to large actions against the Gulf War, to demonstrations against police brutality. I grew up with a lot of the organizers who were working with Rise Up/LA Direct Action Network. I was looking forward to working with friends, but I was also excited to be part of a mass mobilization in the streets of LA.

I was also very interested to see how the organizing was happening in LA. My political focus over the past year has been anti-racist organizing in the movements against global capitalism. I'm a co-trainer with Sharon Martinas in the Challenging White Supremacy Workshop in SF. Sharon and I were part of an anti-racist organizing study group which examined how white supremacy is a system that creates and maintains ruling class power through racial oppression against communities of color and white privilege in white communities. Our studies included reading Robert Allen's *Reluctant Reformers* to get a sense of how white supremacy has divided and undermined progressive social change movements historically. From white abolitionists who segregated themselves from Black Abolitionists, to the Labor movement that championed anti-Asian immigration legislation and excluded people of color from American Federation of Labor unions. Our studies also looked at anti-racist white organizing over the past 30 years; from Students for a Democratic Society; to anti-imperialists supporting national liberation struggles led by people of color; to various anarchist projects of the 90's.

The historical study and reflection in the study group helped prepare Sharon and I to initiate a new project on anti-racism and the struggle against imperialist globalization. Our project, which is a workshop, was directly inspired by Elizabeth 'Betita' Martinez's widely distributed essay "Where Was the Color in Seattle".

Our workshop is called "Beyond the Whiteness - Challenging White Supremacy in the Movements against Global Capitalism". The first series was 4 parts, 3 hours each. There was about a hundred pages of readings, role-plays, small group discussions and presentations. The workshop is focused on white radicals, but participation from organizers of color is welcomed. In order to bring down white supremacy, white folks need to be able to recognize and challenge white privilege. White privilege is the major barrier to multiracial, anti-racist movement

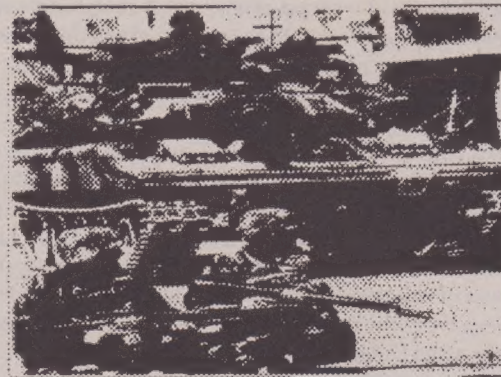
building and some believe that white radicals have a responsibility to take it on. In the workshop, we define white privilege as, "an historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of: 1. preferential prejudice for and treatment of white people based solely on their skin color and/or ancestral origin from Europe; and 2. Exemption from racial and/or national oppression based on skin color and/or ancestral origin from Africa, Asia, the Americas and the Arab world." The workshop also focuses on working in solidarity with radicals of color to end racial oppression and work for collective liberation.

I knew that Rise Up/LA DAN consisted predominately of organizers of color and that anti-racism was a major focus of their work. LA is also home to one of the most multiracial anarchist communities that I know of in the United States. I knew that I would learn a lot and I was excited to get involved.

The week of actions around the DNC were packed. There were 3-6 marches and actions everyday. Each day was organized under a different theme. Monday, August 14th was "Human Needs Not Corporate Greed", with a march in solidarity with the U'wa of Columbia against Occidental Petroleum (which is the source of Gore's family fortune). Tuesday was "An Injury to One is an Injury to All" which had a youth march, a women's liberation march and a queer liberation march. Wednesday was focused on the prison industrial complex and police brutality under the theme "Stop Criminalizing Our Communities". Thursday's theme was "Global Economic and Environmental Justice", 15,000 marched through LA's garment district, protesting sweatshops and demanding immigrant rights.

The Convergence Space was a four story warehouse that provided space for meetings, cooking, banner and puppet making, a room for child care, a medical area, a very welcoming info area with tons of good literature, and an elaborate hydraulic (non-fluoridated) water filter system that kept us hydrated in the blistering heat. The Convergence Space itself was a

KILLING HOPE:



U.S. MILITARY AND CIA INTERVENTIONS SINCE WORLD WAR II

by William Blum

Common Courage Press \$20

"My dear Mr. Emerson," I said aloud, "The Robin bearing this letter is a former student. Please hope him to death, and keep him running. Your most humble and obedient servant, A. H. Bledoe...."

Sure that's the way it was, I thought, a short, concise verbal coup de grace, straight to the nape of the neck. And Emerson would write in reply? Sure: "Dear Bled, have met Robin and shaved tail. Signed, Emerson." -Elison Rattlesnake #1-page 141

brilliant example of anarchism in action. Meetings for the tactical, medical, communications, security and media teams took place alongside trainings in non-violent direct action, legal, media messaging and anti-racism. Next to signs announcing the next spokescouncil meeting were enlarged photos of civil disobedience actions from the LA Civil Rights movement and Justice For Janitors. This is smart for two reasons. One, it helps create a more welcoming and empowered space for people of color. Two, it pushes white radicals to remember the struggles of people of color for justice. There was a strong commitment to anti-oppression organizing at the Space. When you first walked in, next to the welcoming table, there was a large sign that listed LA-DAN's principles of anti-oppression organizing. They read as following: "1. Power and privilege play out in our group dynamics and we must continually struggle with how we challenge power and privilege in our practice.

2. We can only identify how power and privilege play out when we are conscious and committed to understanding how racism, sexism, homophobia, and all other forms of oppression affect each one of us.

3. Until we are clearly committed to anti-oppression practice all forms of oppression will continue to divide our movements and weaken our power. 4. Developing an anti-oppression practice is life long work and requires a life long commitment. No single workshop is sufficient for learning to change one's behavior. We are all vulnerable to being oppressive and we need to continuously struggle with these issues.

5. Dialogue and discussion are necessary and we need to learn how to listen non-defensively and communicate respectfully if we are going to have effective anti-oppression practice. Challenge yourself to be honest and open and take risks to address oppression head on."

I quote these principles at length, because I believe that LA was a major jump forward in terms of organizing and that the lessons are critical. The Convergence Space was located in a predominately Central American immigrant community. Organizers went door to door throughout the neighborhood to hand out literature in both English and Spanish. Organizers explained what the Convergence Space was, what the actions against the DNC were about. Additionally, people in the community were informed about how they could participate. This kind of work takes time, patience and dedication to building a people's movement and it should be recognized and remembered.

The actions that took place throughout the week were mostly marches. From the first march for Mumia to the last march for immigrant rights, they generally ended at the Staples Center where the Democrats were meeting. Many of the marches connected local issues and struggles with national and international issues and struggles. Like the march and civil disobedience action at the Ramparts police station. Ramparts is currently under federal investigation as a result of police brutality scandals. The march and action had demands that were specific to LA, but the connection to police violence (particularly against communities of color) throughout the United States was made clear.

The actions were also organized with the context of a certain strategy. The strategy was about building the local activist community in Los Angeles, as well as the larger movement for social change. The organizing actively worked to bring together a much more diverse movement on the streets of LA than in Seattle or in Washington, DC. The focus on community organizing and local issues put into the context of global capitalism was one part of the strategy, and the other was tactics. The marches in LA mostly had legal permits. There were action guidelines for the marches which emphasized non-violence and refraining from property destruction.

There was an enormous amount of controversy about tactics. There were arguments about violence vs. non-violence, what the role of property destruction is or isn't and what is radical and what is reformist. However, most of these debates lacked analysis of strategy, or a sense of goals. Mostly white activists argued with each other about who is more revolutionary and who is more ethically correct. The debate often looked like this - those who denounce property destruction are reformist, those who encourage property destruction are violent and morally questionable. Neither of these positions is grounded in strategic thinking. While these debates are perhaps interesting over beer or coffee, they are not the most useful when organizing with thousands of people (or even four). Our debates over tactics should be framed by goals.

The tactics utilized in LA had thought behind them, "How can we bring a radical and diverse movement to the streets during the DNC?" LA organizers

repeatedly explained that confrontation with the police has different consequences depending on who you are. For undocumented immigrants who get arrested in a march, the punishment involves the INS, detention and/or deportation. For people who have a criminal record, the punishment could include another strike in a '3 strikes and your out' state or longer jail time. The number of people who have prior records with the police jumps disproportionately in communities of color (i.e. Driving While Black or Brown). For people who are transgendered, the LAPD deny you the ability to define your own gender and sexuality and tell you what gender they think you are and put you in jail accordingly. Furthermore, for people of color, the experience with the police is different from what largely middle class white activists experience.

Police violence is a major way that racial oppression impacts communities of color. White people, generally speaking, are not assumed by police to be criminals when walking into a store or when driving in a 'nice' neighborhood - this is how white privilege operates. White radicals who don't challenge their white privilege, will not be able to see what is profoundly radical about communities of color mobilized, regardless of whether or not the march is legal. For example, one of the Latino organizers of the permitted march against the Ramparts police station, has had his house raided by the police for his work and he expected more heat from them for this march (legal or not).

In Los Angeles it wasn't just about how to bring out immigrants, transnians and queers, and people of color into the actions. In many instances, these were the people actively involved in the organizing.

Helen Luu, an anti-global capitalism organizer, explained how she sees white privilege operating in the movement. "The clearest example may be the (usually sole) focus on direct action, which almost always also means direct police confrontation. While I do support direct action, I think that the emphasis on this method alone often works to exclude people of colour because what is not being taken into account is the relationship between the racist (in)justice system and people of colour. The white standpoint used in organizing also works to marginalize the activism that people of colour are involved with because other forms of activism are looked down upon as not being radical enough. Who gets to decide what is 'radical' anyway?" She explains further that, "People in positions of privilege (white, male, straight, etc.) have to know when to step back and acknowledge that they can learn a lot from marginalized groups, that these groups don't just need to be 'taught'. Genuine solidarity is something that is essential if we want to further this movement. We have to support each others' work."

This debate on the streets of LA demonstrated several things to me. One, the role of anti-racist white radicals in multiracial organizing. In LA, there should have been more white organizers who actively worked to explain to other white activists why certain tactics had been chosen. I talked with a lot of white activists who understood the strategy once it was explained. The responsibility to explain this should not fall on the shoulders of already overworked organizers of color, who already spend too much time explaining racism to white people. Two, the need for more movement-wide discussions about strategy, vision and goals. What do we hope to accomplish, using what tactics, in what situations? Connecting tactics to goals is useful, as it helps us think about how we want to get from this world of injustice to a future of collective liberation. It can also help us move from attacking each other's beliefs and focus on organizing and winning. It's also important that we set our own goals. In LA, the media constantly referred to our goals in the context of numbers of people at marches (if there was less than 10,000 we failed). In the absence of our own goals, the corporate media decides them for us. We can't fall into that trap. When we set our own goals, then we can have a basis to evaluate our own successes and mistakes. Then we can also discuss our tactics in relationship to how they help us achieve our goals.

The goals that I thought a lot about in LA, and continue to think about are as following:

1. to develop our ability to critique existing society, developing our analysis of white supremacy, patriarchy, heterosexism, capitalism and authoritarianism.
2. to develop our ability to create and hold onto vision, a vision of a radically transformed society based on cooperation, justice and ecological sustainability.
3. To develop our sense of power (challenging both the ways that we are privileged and the ways that we are oppressed) in order to shape history and make our visions a reality.
4. To actively participate in the building of radical multiracial, anti-racist, feminist, queer liberationist, anti-capitalist movements dedicated to solidarity and self-determination.
5. To work for collective liberation, remembering that my liberation is interdependent with your liberation.
6. Have a damn good time."

Through our goals we can develop strategies that go beyond immediate actions or campaigns. Where do we want this movement to be in a year, or five or ten? What can we do to move in that direction? Here's an example. Pauline Hwang is an organizer in Montreal, Canada. She has been working against global capitalism and wants to see a stronger multiracial movement. The summit to negotiate the Free Trade Area of the Americas will be taking place in Quebec City, Canada in April 2001. Pauline helped start a loose network of activists called Colours of Resistance that is beginning to create space to discuss, research and analyze global capitalism and its particular impact on communities of color. The group's first event will focus on immigration. The network's focus is primarily on organizing within communities of color. What is needed is white radicals doing anti-racist work with white activists and predominately white groups. This is also part of the strategy of Colours of Resistance, as both racial oppression and white privilege must be dismantled.

The organizing that took place in Los Angeles was not flawless, but it did grapple with major questions of movement building and resistance. My hope is that we learn from those experiences and continue struggling with these questions in our day to day work. Looking for the important questions and lessons is most times better than thinking we have all the answers.

An excellent book that has lots of nuts and bolts organizing ideas is "Organizing For Social Change: a manual for activists in the 1990's" by Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall and Steve Max.

for more information about the Direct Action Network check out www.directactionnetwork.org

Chris Crass is a white anti-racist/anarchist organizer with the Direct Action Network and part of Colours of Resistance

STEPS FORWARD-END PAGE

-tommy s.

Without any battering of marxist/anarchist theories by little pointy-headed ex-middle class radicals like me, you always come to the most humanitarian and cogent conclusions—given the facts. There is enough food to go around. There is enough land to create sustainable farming. Cities can be made livable and vibrant, even in the blighted and leached urban areas of the USA and south americas. The US gov't is made up of war criminals and corporate lackeys, and most of us don't vote for them. In contrast, the US people, illegal, legal, worker, small businessperson, professional, are trusting and hopeful. And after the constant 24 hour barrage since birth that 'leaders' will fix things for you, you don't trust them for a second. You love only 'your people' and 'your country', not 'your government'. Sometimes among us, this creates a spring breath of love of community and humanhood that we can still find- and it is a testament to our colossal purport...this thrust belies the lie of top down leadership in a completely segregated, torn up, and atomized world, wherein we all still organize, and love, and fight, and show compassion. We, these generations, of the past 150 years of industrial capitalism and horrible slaughters—in the name of nationhood, in the cause of supremacy, in the compromised position of worker against worker—see only a degenerate version of progress for the few, the ruling class. It has gone on long enough. We have been manipulated with market place voodoo, and racism, and wage raise lies...and the false

flattering reaches of a horrible base-desire to believe, by birthright, or color, we are better than someone else. But in our beauty, our base desire to move forward, people rise in concurrent spurts and uplifting battles to realize, that we are , ALL OF US , denying this promising hand of conjurement—denying that ghost spawned from the market, its sugary homage of future credit. The banks, gov'ts, landlords, laments of liberal politicians urging us back to moderation, are not much different from times past: those of Reconstruction in 1866 when black americans were promised to and then thrown into another type of slavery, or the Palmer Raids of 1920. And no different in the modern world where JFK and LBJ created an invasion of a country that was slated to have democratic elections, and 3 million lay dead. Or now, when cluster bombs are dropped on civilians in Nis, Serbia. There is always resistance everywhere, and more often than not it is organized under anarchist principles though usually not called that, and almost always, the people involved in resistance become aware and loudly encompass the interconnectedness of all similar worldwide resistance.

It is a murderous time. One Million dead in Iraq by sanctions alone. But it is not time for desperation.

People with NOTHING fight in the hills of Columbia, Turkey, India, Bolivia, as the security forces of american/western corporations attempt to eradicate them, and then there are the many that fight against cuts in wages and benefits in unreported hamlets of the USA, as their conservative unions betray them. It is time to organize for the benefit of all.

We have seemingly insurmountable barriers ahead of us. Until you become aware of the resistance everywhere. The resistance succeeds and accomplishes so many hollers from atop mountains. History, of our industrial age, and from the news last week, should fill our hearts full of ambition and fortitude to go beyond these insurmountable barriers. It happens every day. And if we don't know it, we must create our own media that tells us what we really need to know.

PROPOSALS TO THE WORKERS

The International/The Organizing

A) Federate all anarchist/syndicalist unions with the specific task immediate organization of a majority of all workers worldwide to restrain or stop military and state murder.

- 1) Many such unions exist. The local groups decide. Join, or form new?
- 2) Create a quarterly meeting of international delegates.
 - a) Understanding that these delegates will bring the voices of the rank and file regarding the support and possibility of international general strikes to stop war and transport of war materials.

B) Begin a worldwide news service(s), and newspaper network so that every urban area, at the least, has a representative source.

- 1) Within these news sources, there must also be open discussion about the local environment, local actions, and strength of workers involved.
- 2) Within these journals, we must be able to learn about what didn't work and what did in struggles for economic, democratic rights and environmental sustainability.
- 3) Within this discussion, we must learn about local economics. In a general strike situation what will that local populace need from the 'outside' within and outside the borders?

FROM: The Rattlesnake
2822 Folsom St.
San Francisco, CA 94110 USA
TO:

4)The local picture and facts in a situation of rebellion: including what will be the most outrageous sources of oppression? Can we set up barriers against massacres beforehand? Can support outside the area be readied beforehand?

C)Continue federation and organizing towards a just and equal and ecological society worldwide. To propagate the ideas of Social Revolutionand organizing without hierarchies.

--The Local (from a somewhat free US outlook)--

1)Civic/Community Organization

a)The unions, encompassing the entire communities' desires, create 'politics', create direct democracy and enforce a non-hierarchical status to achieve civic bottom-up action.

b)Institution of alternative administrative "government" if possible, with non-hierarchical direct democracy to de-legitimize business corporate government.

c)Affinity groups, committees, neighborhood groups, to collect information:

1)route of distribution of goods, availability of basic resources vs. needs.

2)Backlash-largest landowners, source of military attack, i.e. police, National Guard bases etc. -Can they be convinced not to shoot?

3) Separate filthy rich from small business owners. Sympathizers vs. enemies.

4)Industrial sites, food distribution sites important in a general strike.

5)Transportation routes and present control

6)Re-tooling industrial sites for other purposes?

7)Food distribution in event of strike?

d)Local Demands

1)Immediate demand of common meeting spaces

2)Immediate demand of housing for everyone

3)Immediate demand of living wages

This immature outline is meant to inspire debate.

Write on in!!!

For USA readers, I suggest contacting the **IWW- The Industrial Workers of the World**. It is an amazingly democratic union with a beautiful history in the US. Though certainly not a 'pure' anarchist-syndicalist' union, it is the closest the country ever came to free union democracy on a large scale. Its influence and ideas of direct action still move peoples' successes here. And the government and right-wing leaders of the AFL reacted accordingly..and stomped on them. I will do a somewhat comprehensive history of the IWW (the Wobblies) in the next issue, using Thompson, Foner and others as reference. For now I will print the preamble, and let you know that only 5 people can constitute a job shop or branch. So autonomy is very possible when you don't like the "group" in your city. The IWW has not become big again recently, I think, because of the

usual american handicaps....meeting in small cliques in back rooms,attracting too many little lenins/elitists...and not doing door-to-door organizing with paper propaganda on a large scale. I hope this changes soon. There are active branches in every big city still. Though this is not a solution alone, since the most progressive unions, or community actions have been new organizations, the lure of a vibrant history is important.

PREAMBLE for the IWW (1905)

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of the working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life. Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage system. We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever-growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers. These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all. Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system." It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old. Knowing, therefore, that such an organization is absolutely necessary for emancipation, we unite under the following constitution."

Next Issue: I sift through my hundred Dr. Laura tapes for the real ugly picture. Intro articles on history of IWW, history of reactionary AFL leadership, African-American history using Foner, Du Bois, Powledge and others, Clinton's eight years doing the dirty for the rich with a smile and a cigar, Class bias of opinion polls, News on Indonesia, Iraq and Serbia, WTO/Seattle from many sources, and much more street level commentary from the neighborhood and beyond the borders. And of course, words and insight from you the readers.....